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SRIMAD-BHAGAVAD-GITA

OR

The Blessed Lord's Song

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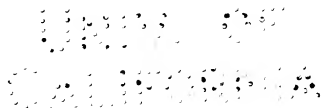
OR

The Blessed Lord's Song

Translated from the Original Sanskrit Text

BY

SWÂMI PARAMÂNANDA



PUBLISHED BY
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PREFACE

THE present translation was undertaken as a labor of love for a small group of earnest students gathered in the quiet garden of a Tuscan hill-side near Florence, Italy. Begun in September, it was completed on the last Thursday of October — a *tour de force* well-nigh impossible for the mere scholar, who not infrequently devotes long years to the same task, but quite possible for the true devotee, whose whole life is but God's Word lived out.

To translate a Scripture three things are essential, — a thorough knowledge of the two languages, a profound understanding of the thought, and a realization of the thought through the life. The letter must be illumined by the spirit; and none can read the translation contained in these pages without feeling convinced that head,

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heart, and life have coöperated in the making of it. The simple, fervent, and spontaneous flow of the Divine Message bears the stamp rather of a direct revelation than of a re-rendering in another tongue. Nowhere is the English bent into unnatural form to follow the Sanskrit, nor yet is the original text ever sacrificed to mere fluency of style. The living voice of the Divine Teacher on the battlefield of Kurukshetra rings forth in every line, as if Sri Krishna Himself were reiterating His Sacred Teaching to a new age and a new people. The living force thus transmitted in such full measure by the translator cannot fail to carry a deeper understanding of the wonderful Holy Words of the Bhagavad-Gita to all who may turn to them for light or strength or peace.

EDITOR

Boston, December, 1912

INTRODUCTION

THE SRIMAD-BHAGAVAD-GITA, or the Blessed Lord's Song, appears in the Mahâ-bhârata, one of the two great sacred epics of India. It gives the Dialogue between Lord Krishna and His disciple Arjuna at the outset of the mighty battle of Kurukshetra. On the one side were the five Pândava brothers, Yudhishtira, Bhima and Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva; on the other, their cousins, the Kurus, led by Duryodhana, all sons of the blind king Dhritarâshtra. The Pândavas represented nobility, honesty, uprightness, valor, skill; while the other side represented ambition, avarice, hatred, jealousy, and unrighteousness. The Pândavas, through the treachery of Duryodhana, had lost their kingdom and had wandered as exiles in the forest for twelve years. At the end of that time, having fulfilled their agreement, they

returned; and being lovers of peace, they begged out of all their former vast empire only five little villages, one for each of the brothers. But jealous Duryodhana refused and Lord Krishna, desirous to avoid a deadly conflict which would involve the noblest men of all India, went Himself in person to the court of the Kurus to try to dissuade the children of Dritarâshtra from an unrighteous war.

"That friend," He declared, "the wise do not consider a friend who uses not every effort to act as a mediator in a rupture between kinsmen. In order that unrighteous, deluded, and inimical people may not say that Krishna, able though he was, did not restrain the angry Kurus and Pândavas from killing each other, I have come to work the good of both parties; and having tried in this matter, I shall free myself from general reproach. Having heard my beneficial counsel, consistent with virtue and profit, if the foolish Duryodhana will not accept it, he will only be subdued by his own fate. If, without sacrificing the rightful interests of the Pândavas, I can secure the peace of the Kurus, I shall have discharged a sacred duty and the Kurus will be liberated from the cords of death."

Thus standing in the council chamber of the blind king, before all the Kuru princes and their allies:

He, of the Vrishni race (Sri Krishna), conversant with the essential truths of all religion, turning towards the irascible Duryodhana, spoke these sweet words:—

“Hear, O Duryodhana, the words that I speak particularly for the good of thyself and thy posterity. Born as thou art in a family distinguished for wisdom, thyself endued with learning and morals, do this word of mine, my good friend. Virtue ever characterizes the conduct of the good in this world and that of evil-minded men is always seen to be the contrary, O prince of the Bharatas. But more than once has such perverted course of action been pursued by thee, the consequence whereof is terrible unrighteousness tending to bring dire destruction of life. Such an evil is never to be wished for, but it would be irresistibly brought about by thee without a cause. Avoiding it, thou shalt do what is good to thyself, thy brothers, thy dependents and thy friends, O scourge of thy foemen, and thou shalt be saved from an ignominious and sinful deed. Make peace, prince of the Bharata race, with the wise, brave, and powerful Pândavas, great in learning and self-subjugation.) From peace would proceed happiness to kinsmen and friends, aye, my dear, to the whole world. Born in a

noble family, thou art endued with a sense of shame, with learning and humanity. Prince of the Bharata race, obey, my dear, the commands of thy father and mother. Whatever the father ordains that the wise consider as fraught with good. Overtaken by dire misfortune, every one calls to mind the counsel of his father. Thy father, together with thy ministers, approves, my dear, thy union with the Pândavas; be it also approved of thee. The man who, having heard the advice of his friends, follows it not, is tormented in the end like him who has eaten the Kimpâka fruit. He who cannot brook the words of his well-wishers, because they are unpleasant, and listens to advice actually adverse, that man is subjugated by his enemies. Who is the man upon earth except thyself, who, despising his kinsmen, mighty warriors equal to Indra himself, would seek protection from others? The sons of Kunti (Pândavas) have, from birth, been persecuted by thee, and they, of righteous hearts, have never resented. From birth, my dear, thy kinsmen (the Pândavas) have been treacherously treated by thee, and they, of unsullied reputation, have always behaved toward thee generously, O thou of mighty arms. It behooves thee to treat with equal generosity thy own principal kindred: be not the slave of passion. The activity of the wise, prince of the Bharatas, is directed towards the triad: virtue, wealth, and pleasure; and when all these are not attainable, they aim at virtue and wealth. When the three are set apart

from each other, the wise man pursues virtue; the middling man wealth, the cause of strife; and the fool pursues pleasure alone. That man perishes, the untrained, who tempted by his senses abandons virtue, desiring to secure profit and pleasure by improper means. Virtue alone should he, from the outset, practise who desires pleasure and profit, for never does true profit or true pleasure deviate from virtue. Virtue alone they declare to be the means of obtaining the three, O prince; and he who by virtue desires to acquire them, doth forthwith flourish like the flame in the forest. Prince of the Bharatas, my dear, it is by unlawful means that thou desirest to obtain the great and glorious sovereignty extending over all the kings. Himself does he hew down, as forest with an axe, who returns deceitful for right behaviour. One should not destroy that man's moral sense whose downfall he does not desire, for in good rests the mind of him whose moral sense is not destroyed. The self-subjugated man should not despise the commonest creature in the three worlds, O Bhârata, far less those princes of Pându's race. The man who is enslaved by passion loses all discernment; and whatever is strained is rent asunder.

"Well would it be for thee, my dear, to unite with the Pândavas rather than with evil men. By being friendly towards them thou shalt attain all desires, enjoying sovereignty over the earth, originally conquered by them, O best of monarchs. Turning thy

back on the Pândavas, thou seekest aid from others. Duhsâsana, Durvishaha, Karna, and Saubala — in these resting thy sovereignty, thou hopest to maintain thy prosperity, O Bhârata. But in wisdom, in virtue, in economy and in valour they are no match for the Pândavas, O Bhârata. All these kings, with thee at their head, are not capable of looking at the face of Bhima, when enraged on the battle-field. All this band of the princes of the earth close to thee, yonder Bhishma, Drona, Karna and Kripa, Bhuriravâh, Aswatthamâ and Jayadratha, all these united are unable to fight against Arjuna. Set not thy heart upon war. What is the good of causing a general slaughter of men? Look to that single man (Arjuna) who being vanquished, victory will be thine. Look at thy sons and brothers, kinsmen and relations; let not these descendants of the race of Bharata perish on thy account. Let there be a remnant of the Kauravas; let not this race be extirpated. Be not, O prince of men, called by the ignominious name of the 'destroyer of the race.' Thee will those great warriors (the Pândavas) install as the Yuvarâja (the Reigning Prince) and thy father Dhritarâshtra, Lord of men, as the Emperor. Despise not, my dear, Fortune rising ready to embrace thee. Giving over half the kingdom to the sons of Prithâ, win high prosperity. Having made peace with the Pândavas and followed the counsel of thy well-wishers, living in love with thy friends, thou shalt ever enjoy all blessings."

Duryodhana remained unmoved by this loving appeal of Lord Krishna and refused to cede to his cousins even so much land as ८॥ "could be covered by a needle's point." Thus war became inevitable. Forces were gathered from every quarter of India and two vast armies were drawn up on the field of Kurukshetra. The blind King Dritarâshtra, unable to watch the battle, was offered sight by the great sage Vyâsa, but declined it, saying that he had no desire to see the destruction of his kinsmen. Vyâsa then bestows on Sanjaya the power of perceiving all that takes place on the battle-field. The Gita begins at this point. The opening words are a question from Dritarâshtra who asks what is taking place in the two opposing forces. And Sanjaya after describing all the distinguished heroes of both armies, comes at last to the main figures of the Gita, Lord Krishna and Arjuna. Arjuna, overwhelmed with grief as he beholds his nearest kinsmen arrayed on the battle-field, refuses to fight, saying:

“Those for whose sake, empire, enjoyment, and pleasures are desired, they themselves stand here in battle forsaking life and wealth. What avail then is kingdom, enjoyment, or even life?” And Lord Krishna, to dispel his unmanly faint-heartedness and to show him the true path of duty and righteousness, speaks to him the profound words of wisdom recorded in the Bhagavad-Gita. One by one through its eighteen chapters every phase of human activity and development is taken up and treated. From the simplest daily task to the most exalted state of spiritual consciousness, at every step of the soul’s evolution, one may turn to this sacred book for inspiration and guidance. The Bhagavad-Gita indeed stands as a summary of all Scriptural teaching, the “Essence of the Vedas”; as a great saint has described it:

“All the Upanishads are the cows, the Lord Himself is the Milker, Arjuna, the calf, and those of purified understanding are the drinkers of the milk, the supreme nectar of the Gita.”

The present translation has been rendered with great care to make the text clear and direct without distorting the original Sanskrit. This Holy Book is now sent out with the hope and prayer that the translator's labor of love may prove a help and blessing to many.

PARAMÂNANDA

SRIMAD-BHAGAVAD-GITA

The Blessed Lord's Song

CHAPTER I

Dhritarâshtra asked:

O Sanjaya, assembled together on the sacred plain of Kurukshetra, being desirous to fight, what did my people and the Pândavas do? [1]

Sanjaya replied:

The Prince Duryodhana, having seen the Pândava forces arrayed, approached his teacher (Drona) and spoke these words: [2]

Behold this mighty host of the sons of Pândava arrayed by the son of Drupada, thy gifted pupil. [3]

Here are heroes, mighty bowmen, equals in battle to Bhima and Arjuna — the great

warriors, Yuyudhâna, Virâta, Drupada; valiant Drishtaketu, Chekitâna and the King of Kâshi; Purujit, Kunti-Bhoja and Shaibya, the greatest of men; the powerful Yudhamanyu and the brave Uttamaejas; the son of Subhadra and the sons of Draupadi; all of them mighty car-warriors. [4-6]

O best of twice-born,¹ hear also of those who are distinguished among ourselves, the leaders of my army; I relate their names for thy information. [7]

Thyself and Bhishma and Karna, and Kripa, the victorious in battle, Aswatthamâ, Vikarna, Jayadratha, the son of Somadatta. [8]

Also there are many heroes skillful in battle armed with many kinds of weapons, determined to lay down their lives for my sake. [9]

Yet this army of ours, though commanded by Bhishma, seems insufficient; but their

¹ A Brâhmin is called a twice-born because he is born for the second time when he receives his holy thread or badge for spiritual life.

army, commanded by Bhima, seems sufficient. [10]

Therefore ye all, being stationed in your proper places in the divisions of the army, support Bhishma alone. [11]

The powerful, the eldest of the Kurus (Bhishma), the grandsire, in order to cheer him (Duryodhana), sounded aloud a lion's roar and blew his conch. [12]

Then (following Bhishma), conchs, kettle-drums, tabors, trumpets and cowhorns suddenly sounded. The noise was tremendous. [13]

Then Mâdhava (Krishna) and Pândava (Arjuna) stationed in their great war chariot, yoked to white horses, also blew their divine conchs. [14]

Hrishikesh¹ (Krishna) blew the Pânchajanya; and Dhananjaya² (Arjuna), Devadatta³ (God-given); and Vrikodara⁴ (Bhima),

¹ The Lord of the senses.

² Conqueror of wealth.

³ Name of the conch.

⁴ Having the belly of a tiger, indicating the physical formation of a hero.

doer of terrible deeds, blew his large conch Paundra. [15]

King Yudhishtira, son of Kunti, blew the conch named Anantavijaya (endless victory). Nakula and Sahadeva their Sughosha and Manipushpaka. [16]

The King of Kâshi, the great bowman, and the mighty warrior Shikhandi, Dhrishadyumna, Virâta and the unconquered hero, Sâtyaki; [17]

(King) Drupada and the sons of Draupadi and the mighty-armed son of Subhadra, each blew respectively his own conch, O Lord of the Earth! [18]

That tremendous uproar, filling earth and sky with sound, rent the hearts of Dhritarâshtra's party. [19]

Then, O Lord of the Earth! the son of Pându (Arjuna), whose ensign was the monkey, seeing Dhritarâshtra's army arrayed and the throwing of weapons about to begin, raised his bow and spoke the following words to Krishna: [20]

Arjuna said:

O Achyuta (changeless, Krishna), place my chariot between the two armies desirous of battle, so that I may see with whom I have to fight in this outbreak of war, for I desire to observe those who are assembled here for battle wishing to please the evil-minded son of Dhritarâshtra by taking his side. [21-23]

Sanjaya said:

O King! Requested thus by Gudâkesha¹ (Arjuna), Krishna, having placed the war chariot between the two armies in front of Bhishma, Drona and all the rulers of the earth, spoke thus: O son of Prithâ (Arjuna), behold all the Kuru forces gathered together. [24-25]

Then Pârtha (Arjuna) saw there in both armies arrayed grandfathers, fathers-in-law, uncles, brothers and cousins, his own sons and their sons and grandsons, comrades, teachers and friends. [26]

¹The conqueror of sleep.

Then he, the son of Kunti (Arjuna), seeing all his kinsmen stationed in their ranks, spoke thus sorrowfully, overwhelmed with deep compassion: [27]

Arjuna said:

O Krishna, seeing these my kinsmen, gathered here desirous to fight, my limbs fail me, my mouth is parched; [28]

My body shivers, my hair stands on end, my Gandiva (bow) slips from my hand, my skin is burning. [29]

O Keshava (Krishna, the slayer of Keshi), I am not able to stand upright, my mind is in a whirl and I see adverse omens. [30]

O Krishna, neither do I see any good in slaying my own people in this strife. I desire neither victory, nor kingdom, nor pleasures. [31]

Teachers, uncles, sons and grandsons, grandfathers, fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law, besides other kinsmen, for whose sake empire, enjoyment and pleasures are desired,

they themselves stand here in battle, forsaking life and wealth. What avail, then, is kingdom, enjoyment, or even life, O Govinda (Krishna)? [32-34]

These warriors I do not wish to kill, even though I am killed by them, not even for the dominion over the three worlds, how much less for the sake of this earth, O slayer of Madhu. [35]

O Janârdana (giver of prosperity and salvation, Krishna), what pleasure could there be for us by killing the sons of Dhritarâshtra? Sin alone would take possession of us by slaying these evil-doers. [36]

Therefore we ought not to kill these sons of Dhritarâshtra who are our relations; for how can we, O Mâdhava (Krishna), obtain happiness by destroying our own kinsmen? [37]

Although these (my enemies), their understanding being overpowered by greed, see no evil from extinction of families and no sin in hostility to friends. [38]

But, O Janârdana, why should not we

turn away from this sin, seeing clearly the evil in destruction of family? [39]

From the destruction of a family the immemorial religious rites of that family perish. Spirituality being destroyed, that whole family is overpowered by unrighteousness. [40]

O Krishna, from the predominance of unrighteousness, the women of that family become corrupt; and women being corrupted, there arises intermingling of castes. [41]

This intermingling of castes leads the destroyers of the family to hell, as also the family itself; for their ancestors fall, being deprived of the offerings of rice ball and water.¹ [42]

By these misdeeds of the slayers of the family, bringing about confusion of caste, the immemorial religious rites of family and caste are destroyed. [43]

O Janârdana, we have heard that for such men, whose household religious rites

¹ Certain funeral rites performed for the welfare of the departed ones.

have been destroyed, the dwelling in hell is inevitable. [44]

Alas! what a great sin we are resolved to incur, being prepared to slay our kinsmen, actuated by greed of kingdom and pleasure. [45]

Verily, it would be better for me if the sons of Dhritarâshtra, weapons in hand, should slay me in the battle, unresisting and unarmed. [46]

Sanjaya said:

Speaking thus in the midst of the battle-field, Arjuna sank down on the seat of his war chariot, casting aside his bow and arrows, his mind overwhelmed with sorrow. [47]

*Here ends the First Chapter called
"The Grief of Arjuna"*

CHAPTER II

Sanjaya said:

To him (Arjuna) whose mind was thus overpowered by pity and grief and eyes dimmed with tears, Madhusudana (Krishna) spoke these words: [1]

The Blessed Lord said:

O Arjuna, whence comes upon thee in this critical moment this depression unworthy of an Aryan, disgraceful, and contrary to the attainment of heaven! [2]

O son of Prithâ, yield not to unmanliness; it does not befit thee. Casting off this mean faint-heartedness, arise, O terror of thy foes! [3]

Arjuna said:

O destroyer of enemies and slayer of Madhu (Krishna), how can I fight with arrows in battle against Bhishma and

Drona, who are worthy to be worshipped (by me). [4]

Instead of slaying these great-souled masters, it would be better even to live in this life by begging; but killing them, all our enjoyments of wealth and desires, even in this world, will be stained with blood. [5]

Indeed I know not which of the two is better for us, whether we should conquer them or they should conquer us. For those very sons of Dhritarâshtra stand before us, after slaying whom we should not care to live. [6]

With my nature overpowered by pity and depression and mind confused about duty, I implore Thee (O Krishna) tell me with certainty what is good for me. I am Thy disciple, instruct me, who have taken refuge in Thee. [7]

For I see not what can remove this grief which withers my senses, even if I should obtain unrivalled and flourishing dominion over the earth and rulership over the gods. [8]

Sanjaya said:

Gudâkesha (Arjuna), the conqueror of his foes, having thus spoken to the Lord of the senses (Krishna), said: "I shall not fight, O Govinda!" and became silent. [9]

O descendant of King Bharata, Hrishikesha (Krishna), as if smilingly, spoke these words to him (Arjuna), who was thus grief-stricken in the midst of the two armies. [10]

The Blessed Lord said:

Thou hast been mourning for those who should not be mourned for and yet thou speakest (apparent) words of wisdom; but the truly wise mourn not either for the dead or for the living. [11]

It is not that I have never existed before, nor thou, nor all these kings. Nor is it that all of us shall cease to exist hereafter. [12]

As in this body the embodied soul passes through childhood, youth and old age, in the same manner it goes from one body

to another; therefore the wise are never deluded regarding it (the soul). [13]

O son of Kunti, the feelings of heat, cold, pleasure, pain, are produced from the contact of the senses with sense-objects; they are with beginning and end, transitory. Therefore, O Bhârata, endure them (bravely). [14]

O mighty among men, he is fit to attain immortality who is serene and not afflicted by these sensations, but is the same in pleasure and pain. [15]

There is no existence for the unreal and the real can never be non-existent. The Seers of Truth know the nature and final ends of both. [16]

Know That to be indestructible by which all this is pervaded. No one is ever able to destroy that Immutable. [17]

These bodies are perishable; but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and impenetrable. Therefore fight, O descendant of Bharata! [18]

He who considers this (Self) as a slayer or he who thinks that this (Self) is slain,

neither of these knows the Truth. For It does not slay, nor is It slain. [19]

This (Self) is never born, nor does It die, nor after once having been, does It go into non-being. This (Self) is unborn, eternal, changeless, ancient. It is never destroyed even when the body is destroyed. [20]

O son of Prithâ, how can he slay or cause the slaying of another who knows this (Self) to be indestructible, eternal, unborn and immutable? [21]

As man casts off worn-out garments and puts on others which are new, similarly the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into others which are new. [22]

Sword cannot pierce It (Self), fire cannot burn It, water cannot wet It and air cannot dry It. [23]

It cannot be pierced, nor burned, nor wet, nor dried. It is eternal, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable, everlasting. [24]

This (Self) is said to be unmanifested, unthinkable, unchangeable; therefore knowing this to be so, thou shouldst not grieve. [25]

But even if thou thinkest that this (Self) is subject to constant birth and death, even then, O mighty-armed, thou shouldst not grieve. [26]

For that which is born death is certain, and for the dead birth is certain. Therefore grieve not over that which is unavoidable. [27]

O Bhârata, all creatures are unmanifested in the beginning, manifested in their middle state, unmanifested again in the end. What is there to grieve about? [28]

Some look upon It (Self) with wonder, some speak about It with wonder, some hear about It with wonder and yet others, even after hearing about It, know It not. [29]

The dweller in the body of everyone is ever indestructible; therefore, O Bhârata, thou shouldst not grieve over any creature. [30]

Looking upon it even from the standpoint of thine own Dharma,¹ thou shouldst not

¹ Moral and religious duty.

waver, for nothing is higher for a Kshatriya (warrior) than a righteous war. [31]

O son of Prithâ, fortunate indeed are Kshatriyas to whom comes unsought, as an open gate to heaven, such a war. [32]

But if thou shouldst not take part in this righteous war, then forfeiting thine own duty and honor, thou shalt incur sin. [33]

People will ever speak ill of thee; for the esteemed, dishonor is even worse than death. [34]

These great car-warriors will think that thou hast withdrawn from the battle through fear. And thou shalt be thought of lightly by those who once honored thee highly. [35]

Thine enemies will speak unutterably disgraceful things against thee and blame thy valor. What can be more painful than this? [36]

If thou fallest in battle, thou shalt obtain heaven; if thou conquerest, thou shalt enjoy the earth. Therefore, O son of Kunti, arise and be resolved to fight. [37]

Regarding alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, fight thou the battle. Thus sin will not stain thee. [38]

Thus I have declared unto thee the wisdom of Self-realization. Listen now, O son of Prithâ, regarding Yoga, by knowing which thou shalt be freed from the bonds of Karma (cause and effect). [39]

In this (Yoga) there is neither waste of effort nor possibility of evil results. Even a little practice of this (Yoga) delivers one from great fear. [40]

O son of Kuru, in this (Yoga), the well-resolved mind is single and one-pointed; but the purposes of the irresolute mind are many-branched and endless. [41]

O son of Prithâ, those who delight in the flowery speech of the unwise and are satisfied with the mere letter of the Vedas (Scriptures) saying: "There is naught else"; [42]

And those who are full of desires for self-gratification, regarding heaven¹ as their highest goal, and are engaged in many in-

¹ Heaven is the temporary abode of highest pleasure.

tricate Scriptural rites just to secure pleasure and power as the result of their deeds for their future incarnations; [43]

Whose discrimination is stolen away by the love of power and pleasure and who are thus deeply attached therein, (for such people) it is impossible to obtain either firm conviction (in purpose) or God-consciousness. [44]

The Vedas deal with the three *Gunas*.¹ O Arjuna, be thou free from these three *Gunas*; free from the pairs of opposites (cold and heat, pleasure and pain); ever steadfast, be thou free from (thoughts of) acquiring or keeping and self-possessed. [45]

To the Brâhmana, the knower of Truth, all the Vedas are of as little use as a small water-tank is during the time of a flood, when water is everywhere.² [46]

¹ Sattwa, quality of goodness; Rajas, quality of activity and passion; Tamas, quality of darkness and inertia.

² This verse shows the difference between mere book knowledge and direct vision of Truth.

To work alone thou hast the right, but never to the fruits thereof. Be thou neither actuated by the fruits of action, nor be thou attached to inaction. [47]

O Dhananjaya, abandoning attachment and regarding success and failure alike, be steadfast in Yoga and perform thy duties. Even-mindedness is called Yoga. [48]

no need O Dhananjaya, work (with desire for results) is far inferior to work with understanding. Therefore seek refuge in the Yoga of understanding. Wretched indeed are those who work for results. [49]

Being possessed with this understanding, one frees one's self even in this life from good and evil. Therefore engage thyself in this Yoga. Skillfulness in action is called Yoga. [50]

The wise, possessed with knowledge, abandoning the fruits of their actions, become freed from the fetters of birth and reach that state which is beyond all evil. [51]

When thine intellect will cross beyond

the mire of delusion, then alone shalt thou attain to indifference regarding things heard and yet to be heard. [52]

When thine intellect, tossed by the various conflicting opinions of the Scriptures, will become firmly established in the Self, then thou shalt attain Yoga (Self-realization or union with God). [53]

Arjuna said:

O Keshava, what are the signs of the man of steady wisdom, one who has attained God-consciousness? How does the man of steady wisdom speak? How does he sit? How does he walk? [54]

The Blessed Lord said:

O Pârtha, when a man is satisfied in the Self by Self alone and has completely cast out all desires from the mind, then he is said to be of steady wisdom. [55]

He whose mind is not agitated in calamities and who has no longing for pleasure, free from attachment, fear and anger, he indeed is said to be a saint of steady wisdom. [56]

There is no wisdom for the unsteady and there is no meditation for the unsteady and for the unmeditative there is no peace. How can there be any happiness for the peaceless? [66]

For the mind that yields to the uncontrolled and wandering senses, carries away his wisdom just as a boat on water is carried away by wind. [67]

Therefore, O mighty-armed, his wisdom is established whose senses are well-restrained from all objects of sense. [68]

That which is night to all beings, therein the self-subjugated remains awake; and in that where all beings are awake, that is night for the knower of Self.¹ [69]

As the ocean remains calm and unaltered though the waters flow into it, similarly

¹ The spiritual plane, which to ordinary mortals is like night, full of darkness, is like day, full of clearness and light, to the wise ones; and the sense plane, where the ordinary minds are wide awake and active, there the wise men are as if asleep, knowing the futility of sense desire. These are the two poles of human existence represented by night and day.

a self-controlled saint remains unmoved when desires enter into him; such a saint alone attains peace, but not he who craves the objects of desire. [70]

That man attains peace who, abandoning all desires, moves about without attachment and longing, without the sense of "I" and "mine." [71]

O son of Prithâ, this is the state of dwelling in Brahman (absolute Truth); having attained this, no one is ever deluded. Being established in this knowledge even at the end of life, one attains oneness with Brahman (the Supreme). [72]

*Here ends the Second Chapter called
"Sânkhya-Yoga, or The Path of Wisdom"*

CHAPTER III

Arjuna said:

O Janârdana, O Keshava (Krishna), if to thy mind (the path of) wisdom is superior to (the path of) action, then why art thou engaging me in this terrible action? [1]

By these seemingly conflicting words¹ thou art bewildering my understanding; therefore tell me with certainty that one of these, by following which I can attain the highest. [2]

The Blessed Lord said:

O sinless one, in this world twofold is the path already described by me. The path of wisdom is for the meditative and the path of work is for the active. [3]

A man does not attain to freedom from

¹ Sometimes praising work, sometimes praising wisdom.

action by non-performance of action, nor does he attain to perfection merely by giving up action. [4]

No one can ever rest even for an instant without performing action, for all are impelled by the Gunas (qualities), born of Prakriti (Nature), to act incessantly. [5]

He who, restraining the organs of action, sits holding thoughts of sense-objects in his mind, that self-deluded one is called a hypocrite. [6]

But, O Arjuna, he who, controlling the senses by the mind, follows without attachment the path of action with his organs of action, he is esteemed. [7]

Do thou therefore perform right and obligatory actions, for action is superior to inaction. Without work, even the bare maintenance of thy body would not be possible. [8]

This world is bound by actions, except when they are performed for the sake of *Yajna*.¹ Therefore, O son of Kunti,

¹ Religious ceremonies, sacrifices, worship, etc.

do thou perform action without attachment. [9]

In the beginning the Lord of creatures, having created mankind, together with Yajna, said: "By this (Yajna) ye shall prosper and obtain all desired results, like Kâmadhuk.¹ [10]

"By this (Yajna) ye shall please the Devas (bright ones) and the Devas, in their turn, will cherish you. Thus by cherishing one another, ye shall obtain the highest good. [11]

"The Devas, pleased by the Yajna, will bestow upon you all the objects of your desire." He who enjoys the objects given by the Devas without offering to them, he is indeed a thief. [12]

The righteous, eating the remnants of Yajna (sacrifice), become free from all sins; but the unrighteous, who cook for themselves, eat sin. [13]

¹ The symbolic cow who possesses the extraordinary quality of giving to the milker whatever he desires.

Creatures come forth from food; food is produced from rain; rain comes as the result of Yajna; and Yajna is born of Karma (action). [14]

Know that Karma rises from the Vedas and Vedas from the Imperishable. Therefore the all-pervading Truth (Brahman) is ever established in Yajna (sacrifice). [15]

He who here (on earth) does not follow the wheel thus set revolving, lives in sin and sensuality; O Pârtha, he lives in vain. [16]

— That man, who is devoted to the Self, is satisfied with Self and is content in the Self alone, for him there is nothing to do. [17]

For him there is nothing in this world to gain by action or to lose by inaction; nor does he need to depend on any being for any object. [18]

Therefore, being unattached, perform thy duties (the work that ought to be done) unceasingly; for through the performance of action, unattached, man attains the highest. [19]

Verily, by work alone, Janaka¹ and other (great souls) attained perfection. Also just from the point of view of benefiting mankind, thou shouldst perform action. [20]

Whatsoever a superior (man) does, that alone inferior men do. Whatever example he sets by his actions, that the people (masses) follow. [21]

O Pârtha, there is nothing for Me to accomplish; nothing there is in the three worlds unattained or to be attained by Me, and yet I continue in action. [22]

For if I do not work unceasingly, O Pârtha, men would follow my path (example) in every way. [23]

If I did not work, these worlds would perish.² I should cause the confusion of castes,³ and also the destruction of all beings. [24]

O descendant of Bharata, as the ignorant

¹ The great king who was noted for his wisdom and non-attachment.

² From the lack of social, moral and spiritual examples.

³ Order or division of qualities among men.

(who are attached to results) work, so also (with the same fervor) the wise should act, devoid of attachment, being desirous to help mankind. [25]

One should not unsettle the understanding of the ignorant who are attached to action; the man of wisdom, by steadily performing actions, should engage (the ignorant) in all right action. [26]

All actions are performed by the Gunas, born of Prakriti (Nature). One whose understanding is deluded by egoism alone thinks: "I am the doer." [27]

But, O mighty-armed, the Seer of Truth, understanding the divisions of Guna and Karma (qualities, senses and actions), and knowing that it is only the senses which run after sense-objects, does not become deluded therein. [28]

A man of perfect wisdom should not unsettle the people of small and imperfect understanding, who are deluded by the qualities born of Nature and are attached to the function of the Gunas (senses). [29]

Surrendering all action to Me and fixing the mind on the Self, devoid of hope¹ and egoism,² and free from the fever (of grief), fight, O Arjuna! [30]

Those who constantly practise this teaching of Mine with true faith and devotion and unflinching heart, they too are freed from (the fetters of) action. [31]

But those who find fault with my teaching and do not follow it, such self-deluded ones, devoid of all knowledge and discrimination, know them to be ruined. [32]

Even a wise man acts according to his nature; beings follow nature: What can restraint do? [33]

Attachment and aversion of the senses are based on sense-objects; let none come under the sway of these two. They are his enemies. [34]

Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another, well performed. Better is death, in following one's

¹ Longing for results.

² Sense of "I" and "Mine."

own duty; the duty of another is full of danger. [35]

Arjuna said:

But, O Descendant of Vrishni (Krishna), impelled by what power does a man commit sin even against his wish, constrained, as it were, by force? [36]

The Blessed Lord said:

It is desire, it is anger, born of Rajo-Guna (quality of passion); of unappeasable craving and of great sin; know this as the foe in this world.¹ [37]

As fire is enveloped by smoke, as a mirror by dust, as an embryo by the womb, so is this (Self) covered by that. [38]

O son of Kunti, wisdom is covered by this insatiable fire of desire, the constant enemy of the wise. [39]

The senses, mind and intellect are said to be its seats; through these it deludes

¹ Desire and anger are inseparable, as anger is caused by obstructed desire.

the embodied one by covering his wisdom. [40]

Therefore, O mightiest of the Bharata race, first subduing the senses, kill this (desire), the sinful, destroyer of wisdom and Self-knowledge. [41]

The senses are said to be superior (to the body), the mind is superior to the senses and intellect is superior to the mind; and that which is superior to the intellect is He (Atman, Self). [42]

O mighty-armed, thus knowing Him who is superior to the intellect, and subduing self by the Self, destroy this enemy in the form of desire, difficult to overcome. [43]

*Here ends the Third Chapter called
"Karma-Yoga, or The Path of Work"*

CHAPTER IV

The Blessed Lord said:

I declared this imperishable Yoga to Vivasvân, and Vivasvân told it to Manu, Manu taught it to Ikshvâku. [1]

Thus, handed down in regular succession, the royal sages knew it. This Yoga through long lapse of time has been lost in this world, O Parantapa (Arjuna). [2]

That same ancient Yoga has been (again) today declared to thee by Me, for thou art my devotee and my friend. This is the supreme secret. [3]

Arjuna said:

Later was thy birth and the birth of Vivasvân was prior to thine. How, then, am I to know that thou didst declare this in the beginning? [4]

The Blessed Lord said:

O Arjuna, both you and I have gone through many births. I know them all, but thou knowest them not, O Parantapa. [5]

Though I am unborn and of unchangeable nature, and though I am Lord of all beings, yet by ruling over my Prakriti (Nature) I come into being by my own Mâyâ (mysterious power). [6]

O Bhârata, whenever there is decline of virtue and predominance of vice, then I embody Myself. [7]

For the protection of the good and for the destruction of evil-doers and for the re-establishment of Dharma (virtue and religion) I am born from age to age. [8]

He who thus understands truly My Divine birth and action is not born again on leaving his body, O Arjuna, but he attains unto Me. [9]

Freed from attachment, fear and anger, being absorbed in Me and taking refuge in Me, purified by the fire of wisdom, many have attained My Being. [10]

In whatever way men worship Me, in the same way I fulfil their desires. O Pârtha, in every way men follow My path. [11]

Those who long for success in this world worship the gods, for in the human world success is quickly attained by actions. [12]

The fourfold caste¹ was created by Me according to Guna and Karma (qualities and actions). Although I am the author (of that), yet know me to be the non-doer and changeless. [13]

Actions pollute Me not, nor have I any desire for the fruits of action. He who knows Me thus, is not bound by action. [14]

Knowing this, the ancient seekers after

¹ Brâhmana represents spiritual qualities, — goodness, serenity, etc. Kshatrya stands for the combination of Sattwa (goodness) and Rajas (passion, ambition). Vaisya, merchant class, is represented by Rajas (passion) and Tamas (dullness). Sudra, or the servant class, is typified by Tamas (dullness, ignorance and inertia). In short, this fourfold caste gives an organized form of division of labor, placing each one in a position according to his quality and capacity.

liberation performed action. Do thou, therefore, also perform action as did the ancients in olden time. [15]

Even wise men are bewildered regarding what is action and what is inaction. Therefore I shall teach thee that action, by knowing which thou shalt be freed from all evil. [16]

For verily the nature of right action should be understood, also that of unlawful action and of inaction. The nature of Karma (action) is indeed very difficult to understand. [17]

He who sees inaction in action and action in inaction, he is intelligent among men; he is a man of established wisdom and a true performer of all actions.¹ [18]

Him the sages call wise whose undertakings are devoid of desire for results and of plans, whose actions are burned by the fire of wisdom. [19]

¹ This verse means that a truly wise man knows how to differentiate body, mind and senses from the Self. Even when activity is going on, on the physical plane, he knows that the true Self is not acting.

Having abandoned attachment for the fruits of action, ever content and dependent on none, though engaged in action, yet he does nothing. [20]

Being freed from longing, with self under control, and giving up all sense of possession (ownership), he is not tainted by sin merely by performing bodily action. [21]

Content with whatever comes without effort, undisturbed by the pairs of opposites (pleasure and pain, heat and cold), free from envy, even-minded in success and failure, though acting (he) is not bound. [22]

One whose attachment is gone, who is liberated, whose mind is well-established in wisdom, who works for sacrifice alone, his whole Karma melts away. [23]

Brahman (absolute Truth) is the offering, Brahman is the oblation, the sacrificial fire is (another form of) Brahman and by Brahman is the sacrifice performed. Thus, by performing actions with the consciousness of Brahman, he reaches Brahman alone. [24]

Some Yogis offer sacrifices to the Devas, while others perform sacrifice in the fire of Brahman by offering self by the self alone. [25]

Some offer the sense of hearing and other senses as oblation in the fire of control; still others offer sound and other sense-objects as oblation in the fire of the senses. [26]

Others offer all the actions of the senses and the functions of the vital forces as oblation in the fire of self-control, lighted by wisdom. [27]

Some offer wealth as sacrifice; some, austerity and Yoga as sacrifice; still others, of rigid vow and self-control, offer study of the Scriptures and wisdom as sacrifice. [28]

Yet others offer as sacrifice the outgoing breath in the incoming and the incoming breath in the outgoing, stopping the courses of the outgoing and incoming breaths; thus they constantly practise Prânâyâma.¹

¹ Certain breathing exercises for the control of Prâna, vital force.

Whereas others, regulating their food, offer the functions of the vital forces in the Prâna itself as sacrifice. [29]

All the knowers of sacrifice, burning off their sins (impurities) by the performance of sacrifice and drinking the nectar of the remnant of sacrifice, go to the eternal Brahman (absolute Truth). O best of the Kurus (Arjuna), not even this world is for the non-performer of sacrifice, how much less is the other (world). [30-31]

All these various sacrifices are given in the Vedas (the revelation of Brahman or absolute Truth). Know them all to be born of action; knowing thus thou shalt be freed. [32]

O Parantapa (Arjuna), wisdom-sacrifice is far superior to the sacrifice performed with material objects. The entire realm of action, O Pârtha, ends in wisdom. [33]

Learn this by reverence, by enquiry and by humble service. Those men of wisdom, who have realized the Truth, will teach thee supreme wisdom. [34]

Knowing which, O Pândava, thou shalt not again thus fall into error (delusion) and by which thou shalt see all beings in (thy) Self and also in Me. [35]

Even if thou art the most sinful of the sinful, thou shalt cross over (the ocean of) sin by the bark of wisdom. [36]

As kindled fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the wisdom fire reduce all actions (Karma) to ashes. [37]

Nothing indeed in this world purifies like wisdom. He who is perfected by Yoga, finds it in time within himself by himself. [38]

The man of (unflinching) faith, who has mastered his senses, attains wisdom. Having gained wisdom, immediately he attains to supreme peace. [39]

The ignorant, the faithless and one of doubting mind perishes. There is neither this world nor the next nor any happiness for the doubting self. [40]

O Dhananjaya, one who has renounced actions by Yoga and has cut asunder doubt

by wisdom and who is self-possessed,
actions bind him not. [41]

Therefore, cutting asunder with the sword
of wisdom this doubt of Self, born of
ignorance, lying in the heart, take refuge
in Yoga and arise, O Bhârata! [42]

*Here ends the Fourth Chapter called
"Jnâna-Yoga, or The Path of Wisdom"*

CHAPTER V

Arjuna said:

O Krishna, renunciation of action thou praisest and then again Yoga (performance of action); tell me with certainty which of the two is better? [1]

The Blessed Lord said:

Renunciation (of action) and performance of action both lead to liberation. But of the two, performance of action is superior to renunciation of action. [2]

Know him to be a perpetual renouncer (Sannyâsi) who has neither longing nor aversion, O mighty-armed; being free from the pairs of opposites (cold and heat, pleasure and pain, etc.), he is easily liberated from all bondage. [3]

Children (the ignorant) alone say, not wise men, that wisdom and Yoga are dif-

ferent. He who is truly established in one obtains the fruits of both. [4]

That place which is attained by the Jnânis (wise men), is also reached by the Karma Yogins (men of action). He who looks upon wisdom and the performance of action as one, is a true Seer. [5]

O mighty-armed, renunciation of action is difficult to attain without performance of action. The wise man, being devoted to Yoga (action), ere long attains to Brahman (absolute Truth). [6]

One who is devoted to Yoga, of purified mind, self-subjugated and a master of the senses, realizes his Self as the Self of all beings; though acting he is not tainted. [7]

The self-possessed knower of Truth should think : "I do nothing at all," though seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, breathing, speaking, letting go and holding, opening and closing the eyes, firmly convinced that senses alone move among sense-objects. [8-9]

He who performs actions, surrendering

them to Brahman and abandoning all attachment, is not polluted by sin, as a lotus-leaf¹ by water. [10]

Karma Yogins, for self-purification alone, perform actions with body, with mind, with intellect, even with the senses, abandoning all attachment. [11]

The steady-minded, by giving up all (attachment for) the fruits of action, obtains peace, born of steadfastness. The unsteady (fickle), being attached to fruits through desire, is ever bound (by action). [12]

The self-subjugated embodied one, by renouncing all actions through mental discrimination, rests happily in the city of nine gates (body), neither acting (himself) nor causing (others) to act. [13]

The Lord creates neither the agency (sense of "I"), nor actions for the world, nor union with the fruit of action. It is nature that leads to action. [14]

The omnipresent Lord partakes neither

¹ The lotus-leaf, though it grows in water, is not moistened by it.

of the good nor of the evil deed of any. Wisdom is covered by ignorance, thus mortals are deluded. [15]

But those, whose ignorance is destroyed by Self-knowledge, their knowledge of the Self, like the sun, illumines the Supreme. [16]

Those whose heart and soul are absorbed in That (Supreme), who are steadily devoted to That and regard That as their highest goal, they go never to return, their sins (impurities) being washed off by wisdom. [17]

The wise look upon a Brâhmana endowed with learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a Pariah (dog-eater) with equal regard.¹ [18]

Even here (in this world), existence (earthly life) is conquered by them whose mind rests in equality, for Brahman is without imperfection and equal. Therefore they abide in Brahman. [19]

The steady-minded, undeluded knower of Brahman, being well-established in Brah-

¹ They see the same underlying Self everywhere.

man, neither rejoices on receiving the pleasant nor grieves on receiving the unpleasant. [20]

He, whose heart is unattached to external contacts (of the senses), realizes the happiness that is in the Self; being united with Brahman by meditation, he attains to eternal bliss. [21]

The enjoyments which are born through contact (with sense-objects) are ever generators of misery; (they are) with beginning and end. O son of Kunti, the wise do not seek pleasure in them. [22]

He who can withstand the impulse of lust and anger even here (in this life), before he is separated from the body, is steadfast and truly a happy man. [23]

He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within, and whose light is within, that Yogi, being well-established in Brahman, attains to absolute freedom. [24]

The self-subjugated Rishis (Truth-Seers), whose impurities are washed off, whose doubts are destroyed, and who are engaged

in doing good to all beings, attain supreme liberation. [25]

The Sannyâsins, who are freed from lust and anger, with hearts well-subdued and Self realized, for them absolute freedom exists here and hereafter. [26]

Shutting out the external contact with sense-objects, the eyes fixed between the eyebrows,¹ and equalizing the currents of Prâna (incoming breath) and Apâna (the outgoing breath) inside the nostrils, the meditative man, having mastered the senses, mind and intellect, being freed from desire, fear and anger, and regarding freedom as his supreme goal, is liberated forever. [27-28]

Knowing Me to be the receiver and dispenser of Yajna (sacrifice) and austerity, the Supreme Lord of the Universe and the Friend of all beings, he attains to peace. [29]

*Here ends the Fifth Chapter called
"Sannyâsa-Yoga, or The Path of
Renunciation"*

¹ A form of concentration.

CHAPTER VI

The Blessed Lord said:

He who performs his duty without depending on the fruits of action, he is a Sannyâsi (a true renouncer), and a Yogi (a true worker), not he who is without sacrificial fire or without action. [1]

O Pândava, that which is called Sannyâsa (renunciation) know that to be also Yoga (true performance of action), for none can become a Yogi without giving up fancies for the fruits of action. [2]

For the meditative who is striving to attain Yoga, action is said to be the means; for the same man, when he has attained to Yoga, inaction is said to be the means. [3]

He who is unattached to sense-objects

and to actions, and has given up all fancies for the fruits of action, he is said to have attained Yoga. [4]

Let a man raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself and he alone is the enemy of himself. [5]

He who has conquered himself by the Self, he is the friend of himself; but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy like an external foe. [6]

The Supreme Self of the self-subjugated and serene-minded, is ever undisturbed in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, as well as in honor and dishonor. [7]

He who is satisfied with wisdom and direct vision of Truth, who has conquered the senses and is ever undisturbed, to whom a lump of earth, a stone and gold are the same, that Yogi is said to be a Yukta (a saint of established wisdom). [8]

He is esteemed who looks with equal regard upon well-wishers, friends, enemies, neutrals, a mediator, the hateful,

relatives, upon the righteous and the unrighteous. [9]

A Yogi¹ should constantly practise concentration of the heart, remaining in seclusion alone, subduing his body and mind and being free from longing and possession (sense of ownership). [10]

In a cleanly spot having established his seat firmly, neither too high nor too low, with a cloth, skin and Kusha grass, placed one on the other; [11]

Being seated there, making the mind one-pointed and subduing the activities of mind and senses, let him practise Yoga for self-purification. [12]

Let him hold his body, head and neck erect and motionless, fixing the gaze on the tip of his nose, not looking around.² [13]

Being serene-hearted and fearless, ever steadfast in the vow of Brahmacharya³

¹ One who is striving for union with God through the practice of concentration and meditation.

² A form of concentration.

³ Vow of godly life and continence.

and controlling the mind, let him sit steadfastly absorbed in thoughts of Me, regarding Me as his supreme goal. [14]

Thus ever keeping himself steadfast, the Yogi of subdued mind attains eternal peace and freedom, which abide in Me. [15]

But, O Arjuna, (the practice of) Yoga is not for him who eats too much or who does not eat at all, nor for him who sleeps too much or keeps awake (in excess). [16]

He who is moderate in eating and recreation, moderate in his efforts in work, moderate in sleep and wakefulness, (his practice of) Yoga becomes the destroyer of all misery. [17]

When the mind, completely subdued, rests in Self alone, free from longing for all objects of desire, then he is said to be a Yukta (steadfast in Self-knowledge). [18]

As a lamp placed in a windless spot does not flicker, the same simile is used to define a Yogi of subdued mind, practising union with the Self. [19]

In that state, when the mind is completely

subdued by the practice of Yoga and has attained serenity, in that state, seeing Self by the self, he is satisfied in the Self alone. [20]

In that state, transcending the senses, he (the Yogi) feels that infinite bliss which is perceived by the purified understanding; knowing that and being established therein, he never falls back from his real state (of Self-knowledge); [21]

After having attained which, no other gain seems greater; being established wherein, he is not overwhelmed even by great sorrow. [22]

Know that (state) of separation from the contact with pain as Yoga. This Yoga should be practised with perseverance and undepressed heart. [23]

Abandoning without reserve all the desires born of mental fancies, and restraining completely by the mind the entire group of the senses from all directions, [24]

With understanding held by firmness, and mind established in the Self, let him (thus)

by degrees attain tranquillity; let him not think of anything else. [25]

Wheresoever the restless and unsteady mind may wander away, let him withdraw it from there and bring it under the control of the Self alone. [26]

He whose passions are quieted and mind perfectly tranquil, who has become one with Brahman, being freed from all impurities, to such a Yogi comes supreme bliss. [27]

Thus constantly holding the mind steadfast, the Yogi, whose sins are shaken off, easily attains the infinite bliss, born of contact with Brahman. [28]

He whose heart is steadfastly engaged in Yoga, looks everywhere with the eyes of equality, seeing the Self in all beings and all beings in the Self. [29]

He who sees Me in all and all in Me, from him I vanish not, nor does he vanish from Me. [30]

He who, being established in unity, worships Me dwelling in all beings, that Yogi, howsoever living, abides in Me. [31]

O Arjuna, he who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that Yogi is highly esteemed. [32]

Arjuna said:

O Destroyer of Madhu (Krishna), this Yoga, which has been declared by Thee as even-mindedness, I do not see (the possibility) of its lasting existence, owing to the restlessness of the mind. [33]

O Krishna, the mind is restless, turbulent, strong and unyielding; I consider it as difficult to subdue as the wind. [34]

The Blessed Lord said:

Doubtless, O mighty-armed, the mind is restless and difficult to control; but, O son of Kunti, through practice and dispassion (renunciation) it can be conquered. [35]

Yoga is difficult to attain by him who is of uncontrolled self: such is my conviction; but the self-subjugated can attain it by following the right means. [36]

Arjuna said:

O Krishna, he who, though possessed with faith, yet lacks in control and whose mind wanders away from Yoga, what end does he meet, failing to reach perfection in Yoga? [37]

O Mighty-armed (Krishna), does he not perish like a rent cloud, supportless, fallen from both (here and hereafter), deluded in the path of Brahman (Truth)? [38]

O Krishna, this doubt of mine Thou oughtest to dispel, for there is none but Thee who is able to destroy this doubt. [39]

The Blessed Lord said:

O Pârtha, there is no destruction for him either here or hereafter, for the well-doer (devotee), O Beloved, never comes to an evil end. [40]

One who is fallen from Yoga, after having attained the regions of the righteous and dwelling there for unlimited time, re-incarnates in the house of the pure and prosperous. [41]

Or else he is born in the family of wise Yogis; but such a birth is very rare to obtain in this world. [42]

O descendant of Kuru, there (in that incarnation) he gains the knowledge acquired in his previous incarnation, and he strives again more (fervently) than before for perfection. [43]

He is irresistibly led by the previous practice (of Yoga). Even the enquirer of Yoga goes beyond the letter-Brahman.¹ [44]

But the Yogi, striving with perseverance, purified from all sin, perfected through many births, reaches the supreme goal. [45]

The Yogi is superior to ascetics, and superior to those who have attained wisdom through books; he is also superior to performers of action (according to the Scriptures). Therefore, O Arjuna! be thou a Yogi. [46]

¹ The performer of rites and rituals given in the Scriptures.

And among all the Yogis, to Me he is the highest, who, with his inner self absorbed in Me, worships Me with (unflinching) faith. [47]

*Here ends the Sixth Chapter called
"Dhyâna-Yoga, or The Path of
Meditation"*

CHAPTER VII

The Blessed Lord said:

O Pârtha, practising Yoga, with thy mind fixed on Me and taking refuge in Me, do thou hear how without doubt thou shalt know Me fully. [1]

I shall declare unto thee without reserve this knowledge (speculative) and wisdom (practical), having known which nothing more here (in this world) remains to be known. [2]

Among thousands of human beings, scarcely one strives for perfection; and among (the thousands of) faithful strivers after perfection, scarcely one knows Me in truth. [3]

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect, egotism, thus my Prakriti (Nature) is divided eightfold. [4]

This Prakriti is inferior; but different from

this, know thou, mighty-armed, my higher Prakriti in the form of life-consciousness, by which this universe is supported. [5]

Know that all beings are generated from these two (Prakritis). I am the origin and also the dissolution of the entire universe. [6]

O Dhananjaya (Arjuna), there is naught else (existing) higher than I. Like pearls on a thread, all this (universe) is strung in Me. [7]

O son of Kunti, I am the sapidity in waters and the radiance in sun and moon, I am Om¹ in all the Vedas, sound in Akâsha (ether), self-consciousness in mankind. [8]

I am the sacred fragrance in earth and brilliance in fire; I am the life in all beings and austerity in ascetics. [9]

Know Me, O Pârtha, as the eternal seed of all beings. I am the intellect of the intelligent and the prowess of the powerful. [10]

¹ The Pranava or Word-God. The same as the *Logos* of Christian theology.

O mighty of the Bharata race, of the strong I am the strength, devoid of desire and attachment; I am (also) desire in all beings, unopposed to Dharma (spiritual duty). [11]

Whatever conditions there are pertaining to the states of Sattwa (quality of goodness), Rajas (passion), Tamas (ignorance, inertia), know them all to proceed from Me. I am not in them, but they are in Me. [12]

Being deluded by these states, composed of the three Gunas (qualities), all this world does not know Me, who am beyond these and immutable. [13]

Verily this divine Mâyâ of mine (elusive mystery), composed of Gunas, is difficult to surmount; those who take refuge in Me alone, they cross over this Mâyâ. [14]

The deluded, evil-doers, the lowest of men, robbed of understanding by Mâyâ and following demonic tendencies, do not attain unto Me. [15]

O Prince of the Bharata race, O Arjuna,

four kinds of virtuous men worship Me: the distressed, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of material prosperity and the wise. [16]

Among them the wise, ever steadfast, devoted to the One (to Me), excels; for I am supremely dear to the wise and he is dear to Me. [17]

Noble are all these, but I regard the wise as my very Self; for with soul ever steadfast, he is established in Me alone as his supreme goal. [18]

At the end of many births the man of wisdom comes unto Me, seeing that all this is (pervaded by) one Self. Such a great-souled one is very difficult to find. [19]

Those whose discrimination is stolen away by diverse desires, worship other deities by observing various external rites (with the hope of gaining pleasure, power, etc.), being impelled by their own nature. [20]

Whatever devotee seeks to worship what-

ever (Divine) form with faith, I make his faith unwavering. [21]

Possessed with that faith, he engages himself in worship of (that deity); and from that he gains the desired results, those being granted by Me alone. [22]

But the fruit (acquired) by these men of small understanding is limited and perishable. The worshippers of the Devas (bright ones) go to the Devas; but my devotees come unto Me. [23]

The ignorant, not knowing my Eternal, Immutable and Supreme state, consider Me as the unmanifested coming into manifestation. [24]

I am not manifest to all, being veiled by Yoga-Mâyâ.¹ This deluded world knows Me not, the Unborn and Immutable. [25]

O Arjuna, I know the past, present and future of all beings, but no one knows Me. [26]

O Bhârata, terror of thy foes, all beings at birth fall into delusion, caused by the

¹ Delusion composed of the three Gunas.

pairs of opposites, arising from desire and aversion. [27]

But those men of virtuous deeds, whose sin has come to an end, freed from the delusion of the pairs of opposites, worship Me with firm resolve. [28]

Those who, having taken refuge in Me, strive to attain freedom from old age and death, they know Brahman, the whole of the individual Self and the entire realm of Karma (action). [29]

Those who know Me in the physical realm, in the Divine realm and in the realm of sacrifice, being steadfast in heart, they know Me even at the time of death. [30]

*Here ends the Seventh Chapter called
"Jnâna-Vijnâna-Yoga, or The Path of
Wisdom and Realization"*

CHAPTER VIII

Arjuna said:

O Best of Beings (Krishna), what is Brahman, what is Adhyâtma (embodied soul), and what is Karma? What is the physical realm (Adhibhuta), and what is called the Divine realm (Adhidaiva)? [1]

O Destroyer of Madhu, how and who dwells in this body as Adhiyajna (deity of sacrifice); and how art Thou known at the time of death by the self-subjugated ones? [2]

The Blessed Lord said:

The Imperishable Supreme Being is Brahman, its manifestation as the embodied soul is called Adhyâtman. The prescribed sacrifice, which causes the creation and support of beings, is called Karma. [3]

O best of the embodied (Arjuna), perishable existence is called Adhibhuta (the physical); the Supreme Self is the Adhidai-vata (Universal Spirit). I am the Adhiyajna (the presiding deity of sacrifice) in the body. [4]

He who, at the time of death, thinking of Me alone, goes forth, leaving the body, he attains unto my Being. There is no doubt in this. [5]

O son of Kunti, whatever state (or being) one dwells upon in the end, at the time of leaving the body, that alone he attains, because of his constant thought of that state or being. [6]

Therefore, at all times, think of Me and fight (perform actions). Having offered thy mind and intellect to Me, thou shalt without doubt come unto Me. [7]

O son of Prithâ, by the steadfast practice of meditation with unwavering mind (not moving elsewhere) and constant thought of the Supreme Divine Being, one goes to Him. [8]

He who thinks upon the Omniscient, the Ancient, the Ruler, the minutest of the minute, the Sustainer of all, whose form is inconceivable, Self-effulgent like the sun, and beyond the darkness (of ignorance); [9]

(He who thus meditates on Him) at the time of death, with unflinching mind, possessed with devotion, fully fixing the Prâna (life-breath) between the eyebrows by the power of Yoga, he attains to the Supreme Divine Being. [10]

That which the knowers of Veda (Truth, Wisdom) speak of as imperishable, that which the unattached Sannyâsins¹ enter into, by desiring which they practise Brahmacharya,² that state I shall declare unto thee in brief. [11]

Closing all the gates of the senses, confining the mind in the heart, and fixing the Prâna in the head (between the eyebrows), thus engaged in the practice of concentration (Yoga); [12]

¹ Self-controlled renouncers.

² Life of continence and purity.

Uttering the monosyllable "Om," (the sound) Brahman, and meditating on Me, he who departs, leaving his body, he attains the supreme goal. [13]

He who is without any other thought (but Me), who remembers Me daily and constantly, O Pârtha, I am easily attained by that ever-devoted Yogi. [14]

The great-souled ones, having reached Me, do not come to re-birth, the ever-changing abode of misery, for they have attained the highest perfection. [15]

O Arjuna, all worlds, from the abode of Brahmâ to this world, are subject to return; but, O son of Kunti, after having attained Me, there is no re-birth. [16]

Those who know that Brahmâ's day ends in a thousand Yugas (ages) and his night in a thousand Yugas, they are the true knowers of the night and day. [17]

At the approach of (Brahmâ's) day, all manifestations proceed from the Unmanifested, and at the approach of the night,

they merge into that which is called the Unmanifested.¹ [18]

O Pârtha, the multitude of beings, coming into birth again and again, helplessly merge into (the Unmanifested) at the approach of night and again remanifest at the approach of day. [19]

But beyond this Unmanifested, there is another Unmanifested, which is eternally existent and is not destroyed even when all beings are destroyed. [20]

That which has been described as Unmanifested and Imperishable is called the Highest Goal, having attained which there is no return (re-births). That is my Supreme Abode. [21]

O son of Prithâ, that Supreme Self, in whom all beings abide and by whom all this is pervaded, can be attained by whole-hearted and exclusive devotion to Him. [22]

¹ These two verses signify the evolution and involution of the sum-total of Cosmic energy, represented by Brahmâ's day and night.

O Prince of the Bharata race, now I shall declare to thee that time, at which in departing (leaving the body) the Yogis return (to re-birth), and also that time at which in departing they do not return. [23]

Fire, light, day-time, the bright fortnight (ascending moon), the six months of the sun's northern course, departing at such time, the knowers of Brahman go to Brahman. [24]

Smoke, night-time, the dark fortnight (waning moon), the six months of the sun's southern course, the Yogi departing at such time and receiving the lunar light, returns. [25]

These two are considered as eternal paths of the world, the bright and the dark (path of wisdom and path of ignorance). By one, (man) attains to non-return (freedom); by the other, he returns again. [26]

O son of Prithâ, by knowing these (two) paths, the Yogis are never deluded. Therefore, O Arjuna, in all times be thou steadfastly engaged in Yoga. [27]

Whatever fruits of good deeds are promised in the study of the Vedas, in sacrifices, in the practice of austerities, in charitable gifts, the Yogi, having known these and rising above all, attains to the primeval Supreme Abode. [28]

*Here ends the Eighth Chapter called
"Akshara-Brahma-Yoga, or The
Path of the Imperishable
Brahman"*

CHAPTER IX

The Blessed Lord said:

(Now) I shall declare to thee, who art without evil thought, this great secret, wisdom together with realization, knowing which thou shalt be freed from evil. [1]

This is the king of sciences, king of secrets, the supreme purifier; it is realized by direct perception and is endowed with righteousness, easily performed and imperishable. [2]

O Parantapa (Arjuna), the men who have no faith in this Dharma (science of Self-knowledge), without attaining Me, return to the path of death and re-birth. [3]

By My manifested Form all this world is pervaded, all beings dwell in Me, (but) I do not dwell in them. [4]

Behold My Divine Yoga! Beings do not

dwell in Me; (although) the Creator and Supporter of all beings, (yet) My Self dwells not in them. [5]

As the air, vast and always moving everywhere, exists in Akâsha (space and ether), even so, know thou, all beings exist in Me. [6]

O son of Kunti, all beings, at the end of a cycle, go back to my Prakriti (Nature); again, at the beginning of a cycle, I send them forth. [7]

Ruling over My Prakriti, I send forth again and again this vast multitude of beings, who are helplessly impelled by Nature. [8]

O conqueror of wealth (Arjuna), these acts (of creation and dissolution) do not bind Me, sitting as one unconcerned and unattached to these acts. [9]

O son of Kunti, with Me as the presiding Deity, Prakriti (Nature) sends forth the moving and the unmoving. For this reason the world wheels round and round. [10]

Fools, unaware of My Supreme state, as

the great Lord of beings, disregard Me dwelling in human form. [11]

They are of vain hopes, of vain deeds, of vain knowledge, and senseless, possessed with the deluding nature of Râkshasas (unclean, passionate and godless creatures) and Asuras (creatures of darkness and of ignorance). [12]

But, O son of Kunti, the great-souled ones, possessing the Divine Nature, knowing Me as Immutable and as the Source of beings, worship Me with single-minded devotion. [13]

Ever singing My glory and striving with steadfast vows, bowing down to Me in devotion, (they) perpetually worship Me. [14]

Others again by performing the wisdom-sacrifice worship Me, the All-facing, as One, as separate, or in manifold forms. [15]

I am Kratu,¹ I am Yajna,² I am Svadhâ,³

¹ Certain Vedic rite.

² Sacrifice.

³ Offering for the benefit of the departed ancestors.

I am medicinal herbs, I am the Mantra,¹ I am the oblation, I am the fire and I am the act of sacrifice. [16]

I am the Father of the universe, the Mother, the Sustainer, the Grandsire, the One to be known, the Purifier, Om (Sound-Brahman), the Rik, Saman and Yajur.² [17]

(I am) the Way, the Supporter, the Lord, the Witness, the Abode, the Refuge, the Friend, the Origin, the Dissolution, the Resting-Place, the Storehouse and the Eternal Seed. [18]

O Arjuna, I give heat, I send forth rain and withhold it; I am Immortality and also Death. I am being and non-being (the manifested and the unmanifested). [19]

The knowers of the three Vedas,³ having worshipped Me with sacrifice, drinking the Soma⁴ and thus being purified from sin,

¹ The sacred text, by repeating and meditating on which one is purified.

² Different branches of the Vedas.

³ Mentioned in verse 17.

⁴ Nectar, remnant of the sacrifice.

pray for the goal of heaven; they, having reached the region of the ruler of the Devas, enjoy in heaven the celestial pleasures of the Devas. [20]

Having enjoyed that vast celestial world, they, at the exhaustion of the merit (of their good deeds), again enter into the mortal world; thus following the religion of the three Vedas, with the craving for objects of desire, they attain coming and going (birth and re-birth). [21]

Those who worship Me and meditate on Me without any other thought, to these ever steadfast devotees I secure safety and supply all their needs (I carry their burden). [22]

O son of Kunti, even those devotees who worship other gods with faith, they too worship Me, but contrary to the law. [23]

For I am alone the Enjoyer and Lord of all sacrifice; but they do not know Me in truth, hence they return (fall into re-birth). [24]

The worshippers of the gods go to the gods; to the ancestors go the ancestor-

worshippers; the spirit-worshippers go to the spirits; but My worshippers come unto Me. [25]

He who, with devotion offereth to Me a leaf, a flower, a fruit and water, that love-offering I accept, made by the pure-hearted. [26]

Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest as oblation, whatever thou givest and the austerities thou performest, O son of Kunti, do that as an offering to Me. [27]

Thus thou shalt be freed from the bonds of action that bears good and evil fruit; and thy soul, being steadfastly engaged in this devotion of renunciation, liberated thou shalt come unto Me. [28]

Alike am I to all beings; hated or beloved there is none to Me. But those who worship Me with devotion, they are in Me and I am in them. [29]

Even if the most wicked worships Me with undivided devotion, he should be regarded as good, for he is rightly resolved. [30]

Very soon he becomes a righteous soul and attains to eternal peace. Know thou, O son of Kunti, that my devotee never perishes. [31]

O Pârtha, even those who are of impure birth,—women, Vaishyas (merchant class) and Sudras (servant class),—even they, by taking refuge in Me, attain to the Supreme Goal. [32]

What need is there, then, to speak of the holy Brâhmanas and the royal Sages! ¹ Having come into this transitory and joyless world, do thou worship Me. [33]

Fill thy mind with Me, be thou My devotee, worship Me and bow down to Me; thus, steadfastly uniting thy heart with Me alone and regarding Me as thy Supreme Goal, thou shalt come unto Me. [34]

*Here ends the Ninth Chapter called
“The Path of Royal Science
and Royal Secret”*

¹ How much more easily is the goal attained by them.

CHAPTER X

The Blessed Lord said:

O mighty-armed, again do thou listen to My Supreme Word, which I, wishing thy welfare, declare unto thee who art rejoiced (to hear Me). [1]

All the Devas know not My origin, nor do the great Rishis (Seers); for I am the Source of all the Devas and the great Rishis. [2]

He who knows Me as birthless and beginningless, the Supreme Lord of the universe, he among mortals is undeluded and is freed from all sins. [3]

Intelligence, wisdom, non-delusion, forgiveness, truth, control of the senses, serenity of the heart, pleasure and pain, birth and death, fear and fearlessness. [4]

Non-injury, equanimity, contentment, austerity, benevolence, fame and infamy;

these different states of beings arise from Me alone. [5]

The seven great Rishis, the elder four ¹ as well as the Manus, were born of My mind and endowed with My nature, from whom (are generated) all these creatures in the world. [6]

He who comprehends in reality these My various manifestations and My Yoga power, he becomes well-established in unshakable Yoga. There is no doubt in this. [7]

I am the Origin of all, everything evolves from Me. Knowing this, the wise worship Me with loving ecstasy. [8]

With their heart fixed on Me, with their life absorbed in Me, mutually enlightening (one another), and perpetually singing My glory, they are contented and rejoiced. [9]

To these ever steadfast and loving worshippers, I give that Yoga of wisdom by which they come unto Me. [10]

Out of pure compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the dark-

¹ Elder than the seven.

ness born of ignorance, by the effulgent light of wisdom. [11]

Arjuna said:

Thou art the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Abode and Supreme Purity. All the Rishis (Sages), the divine sage Nârada, as well as Asita, Devala and Vyâsa, have declared Thee as the Eternal and Self-effulgent Being, the primeval Deity, unborn and all-pervading; and Thou Thyself declarest to me the same. [12-13]

O Keshava (Krishna), I regard all that Thou sayest to me as true. O Blessed Lord, neither the Devas nor the Dânavas (demi-gods) know Thy manifestations. [14]

O Supreme Being, O Source of beings, O Lord of beings, O God of gods, O Ruler of the universe, Thou Thyself alone knowest Thyself by Thyself. [15]

(O Lord), Thou oughtest to tell me, without reserve, of Thy Divine manifestations, by which Divine attributes Thou abidest, pervading all the worlds. [16]

O Yogin (Krishna), how by constantly meditating on Thee shall I know Thee? O Blessed Lord, in what aspects art Thou to be meditated upon by me? [17]

O Janârdana (Krishna), tell me again in detail of Thy Yoga power and Divine attributes, for I am never satiated in listening to Thy words of nectar. [18]

The Blessed Lord said:

O best of the Kurus, I shall declare to thee My principal Divine attributes, for there is no end to the vastness of My manifestations. [19]

(O Gudâkesha (Arjuna), I am the Self existing in the heart of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle and also the end of beings. [20]

I am Vishnu of the Adityas, of the luminaries I am the radiant Sun, among the winds I am Marichi, among the constellations I am the Moon. [21]

Of the Vedas I am the Sâma-Veda, and of the Devas I am Vâsava (Indra). Of the

senses I am the mind and I am the consciousness of all living beings. [22]

Of the Rudras I am Sankara; I am the Lord of wealth of the Yakshas and Râkshasas; of the Vasus I am the Fire-god; I am Meru among the mountains. [23]

O Pârtha, know Me to be Brihaspati, the high priest; of generals, I am Skanda; among waters, I am the ocean. [24]

I am Bhrigu among the great Rishis; of words, I am the monosyllable "Om." Of Yajnas (sacrifices), I am Japa¹; of the immovable, I am the Himâlaya. [25]

I am Aswattha among all the trees; among the divine Rishis, I am Nârada. I am Chitraratha of the Gandharvas; I am the sage Kapila among the perfected ones. [26]

Among horses, know Me as Uchchaisrava, born of nectar; and of the lordly elephants as Airâvata, and among men as Monarch. [27]

I am the Thunderbolt among weapons;

¹ Silent repetition of the sacred text.

among cows, I am Kâmadhuk. I am Kandarpa, the cause of offspring; and of serpents, I am Vâsuki. [28]

I am Ananta among the snakes; I am Varuna among water-beings; of ancestors, I am Aryamâ; I am Yama among rulers. [29]

I am Prahlâda among the Daityas; of measures, I am Time; among wild beasts, I am the lord of beasts (the lion); and among birds, I am Vainateya. [30]

Among purifiers, I am the wind; among warriors, I am Râma; among fishes, I am Makara (shark); and among rivers, I am the Ganges. [31]

O Arjuna, of all creations I am the beginning, the middle and also the end; of all the sciences, I am the science of Self-knowledge; among the disputants, I am Vâda.¹ [32]

Of syllables, I am "A," and Dvandva of all compound words. I am inexhaustible Time; I am the Dispenser (of fruits of actions), facing everywhere. [33]

¹ Truth-seeking arguments.

I am all-seizing Death; I am the origin of all that is to be; of the female I am fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intelligence, constancy and forgiveness. [34]

I am the Brihat-sâman of the Vedic hymns; I am Gâyatri of metres. Of months I am Mârgashirsha and of seasons I am the flowering season. [35]

I am gambling among the fraudulent; I am the prowess of the powerful. I am Victory, I am Perseverance, I am the Goodness of the good. [36]

Of the Vrishnis I am Vâsudeva; among the Pândavas I am Dhananjaya; among the saints I am Vyâsa and among the sages I am Ushanâ. [37]

I am the Rod of disciplinarians; I am the Polity of the seekers of conquest. I am the Silence of secrets; I am the Wisdom of the wise. [38]

O Arjuna, whatever is the seed of all beings, that also am I. Without Me there is no being existent, whether moving or unmoving. [39]

O Parantapa, there is no end to the manifestations of My Divine Power; what I have declared is only a partial statement of the vastness of my Divine manifestation. [40]

Whatever being there is, glorious, prosperous or powerful, know thou that to have sprung from a portion of My splendor. [41]

O Arjuna, what need is there for thee to know these details? I alone exist, sustaining this whole universe by a portion of Myself. [42]

*Here ends the Tenth Chapter called
"Vibhuti-Yoga, or The Path of
Divine Manifestation"*

CHAPTER XI

Arjuna said:

The supremely profound word regarding Self-knowledge, spoken by Thee out of compassion for me, has dispelled this my delusion. [1]

O Lotus-Eyed (Krishna), I have heard at length from Thee of the creation and dissolution of beings, as well as of Thine inexhaustible glory. [2]

O Great Lord, as Thou hast declared Thyself, so it is. O Supreme Being, I desire to see Thy Godly Form. [3]

O Lord, if Thou thinkest me able (worthy) to see that (Form), then, O Lord of Yogis, show me Thine Infinite Self. [4]

The Blessed Lord said:

Behold, O Pârtha, My various celestial Forms, of different colors and shapes, by hundreds and by thousands. [5]

O descendant of Bharata, behold the Adityas, the Rudras, the Vasus, the twin Asvins and the Maruts.¹ Behold many wonders that were not seen before. [6]

O Gudâkesha (Arjuna), behold in this body of Mine the entire universe together, with all that is moving and unmoving and whatever else thou desirest to perceive. [7]

But with these eyes of thine thou canst not see Me; therefore I give thee Divine sight. Behold my Supreme Yoga power! [8]

Sanjaya said:

O King, having spoken thus, the great Lord of Yoga, Hari (Krishna), then showed to Pârtha His Supreme Godly Form. [9]

With many faces and eyes, with many wondrous sights, with many celestial ornaments and with many celestial weapons uplifted, [10]

Wearing celestial garlands and garments, anointed with celestial fragrant perfumes;

¹ Names for celestial beings.

the all-wonderful Deity, infinite, facing the universe everywhere. [11]

If the effulgence of a thousand suns were to shine at once in the sky, that might resemble the splendor of that great Being. [12]

Then the son of Pându (Arjuna) saw the entire universe resting together, with its manifold divisions, in the body of the God of gods. [13]

Then Dhananjaya, overpowered with wonder, and his hair standing on end, bending down his head in awe to the Deity, spoke with folded hands: [14]

Arjuna said:

O God! in Thy body I see all the gods, as well as multitudes of all kinds of beings; the Lord Brahmâ, seated on the lotus throne, all the Rishis and all the celestial serpents. [15]

O Lord of the universe, O Universal Form, I see Thee with manifold arms, bellies, mouths and eyes, boundless on

every side; neither do I see Thy beginning, nor middle nor end. [16]

I see Thee with diadems, maces, discus, shiningly effulgent everywhere, blazing all around like the burning fire and the sun, dazzling to the sight and immeasurable. [17]

Thou art the Imperishable, the Supreme, the One to be known. Thou art the Supreme Refuge of this universe; Thou art the ever unchanging Guardian of the Eternal Dharma (religion); Thou art, I know, the Ancient Being. [18]

I see Thee without beginning, middle or end, with infinite power, with numberless arms, the sun and moon as Thine eyes, Thy mouth as the blazing fire, heating this universe with Thine own radiance. [19]

By Thee alone the space between heaven and earth and all the quarters is pervaded. O Great Soul, seeing this, Thy wonderful and terrifying Form, the three worlds are stricken with fear. [20]

Verily, these hosts of Devas are entering into Thee; some in fear, praising Thee with

folded hands. The host of great Rishis and Siddhas, saying "Svasti" (peace, may it be well), are singing Thy glory in beautiful hymns. [21]

The Rudras, Adityas, Vasus, Sadhyas, the Visvas, the Asvins, the Maruts, the Ushmapâs, the host of Gandharvas, Yakshas, Asuras, Siddhas, they are all looking at Thee wonderstruck. [22]

O Mighty-armed, seeing Thine immeasurable form, with many mouths and eyes, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many loins, and fearful with many large teeth, the worlds and I, as well, are agitated with terror. [23]

O Vishnu, seeing Thee touching the sky, shining in many colors, with mouths wide open, and with large blazing eyes, my heart is terrified and I find neither peace nor tranquillity. [24]

O Lord of gods! seeing Thy mouths, terrible with long teeth, blazing like the fires of destruction, I know not the four quarters, nor do I find any peace. Have mercy, O Abode of the universe! [25]

All these sons of Dhritarâshtra, with the multitude of monarchs, Bhishma, Drona and Sutaputra (Karna), as well as our own principal warriors, [26]

Enter rushing into Thy mouths, terrible with long teeth and fearful to look at. Some are seen hanging between Thy teeth, with their heads crushed to powder. [27]

As the many torrents of rivers rush towards the ocean, similarly do these heroes amongst men enter into Thy mouths, blazing fiercely on all sides. [28]

As the moths rush into the burning fire with headlong speed for destruction, in the same manner do these creatures rush into Thy mouths with headlong speed, only to perish. [29]

O Vishnu! swallowing all the worlds with Thy blazing flames, Thou art licking all around. Thy fierce, radiant rays, filling the whole universe, are burning. [30]

Tell me, who art Thou, in this terrible Form? Salutation to Thee! O Supreme Deity, have mercy! O Primeval One, I

desire to know Thee, for indeed I know not Thy purpose. [31]

The Blessed Lord said:

I am eternal, world-destroying Time, manifested here for the destruction of these people. Even without Thee, none of these warriors, arrayed here in the hostile armies, shall live. [32]

Therefore, do thou arise and acquire glory. Conquering the enemies, enjoy the unrivalled kingdom. By Me alone have they already been slain; be thou merely an instrumental cause, O Savyasâchin¹ (Arjuna). [33]

Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna, as well as the other brave warriors, are already slain by Me. Do thou kill and be not distressed by fear. Fight! and thou shalt conquer thine enemies in battle. [34]

Sanjaya said:

Having heard these words of Keshava (Krishna), (Arjuna) the diadem-wearer, with

¹ Who could shoot arrows even with his left hand.

folded hands, trembling, prostrating himself, again spoke to Krishna in a choked voice, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear. [35]

Arjuna said:

O Lord of the senses (Krishna), it is right that the world delights and rejoices in Thy glory.) The Râkshasas (demonic creatures) fly with fear in all directions and the host of Siddhas bow down to Thee in adoration. [36]

Why should they not bow down to Thee, O Mighty Being, O Infinite One, O Lord of the gods, O Abode of the universe, greater than Brahmâ and even the primeval cause of Brahmâ; for Thou art the Imperishable; (Thou art) Existence and Non-existence and all that is beyond. [37]

O boundless Form, Thou art the Primeval Deity, the Ancient Being, Thou art the Supreme Refuge of this universe; Thou art the Knower, the One to be known and the Supreme Abode. By Thee alone is this universe pervaded. [38]

Thou art Vâyu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the Moon; Thou art the Lord of creatures and the great Grandsire. Salutations to Thee, my salutations a thousand times, again and again my salutations to Thee! [39]

Salutations to Thee before, salutations to Thee behind, salutations to Thee on all sides! O All, infinite in power, and immeasurable in valor, Thou pervadest all, therefore Thou art All. [40]

Not knowing this Thy glory and regarding Thee merely as a friend, whatever I may have said presumptuously, out of either carelessness or fondness, addressing Thee as "O Krishna," "O Yâdava," "O Friend"; [41]

O Changeless One, in whatever manner I may have been disrespectful to Thee, in jesting, in walking, in reposing, sitting, or at meals, alone, or in the presence of others; O Unfathomable One, I implore Thee to forgive all that. [42]

Thou art the Father of the moving and unmoving world, and its object of worship;

greater than the great, O Incomparable Power, no one in the three worlds exists equal to Thee. How can, then, anyone excel Thee? [43]

O Adorable Lord! prostrating my body in adoration, I beg Thy forgiveness. O God, as a father forgives his son, a friend his dear friend, a beloved one his love, even so do Thou forgive me! [44]

O God, joyous am I to have seen (Thy form) which I never saw before; yet my heart is agitated with terror, therefore show me that Form of Thine. O God of gods! O Abode of the universe, have mercy! [45]

I desire to see Thee as before, with diadem, mace and discus. O Universal Form of thousand arms, do Thou manifest Thyself in that same Four-armed Form (form of Vishnu). [46]

The Blessed Lord said:

O Arjuna, mercifully have I shown thee this Supreme Form by My own Yoga power.

This effulgent, infinite, primeval, great universal Form of Mine, which has not been seen by anyone else before thee. [47]

O great hero of the Kurus, not by the study of the sacred Vedas or by sacrifice, not by charity or rituals, nor by severe austerities, am I visible in such Form in this world of men to any other than thee. [48]

Be not frightened nor bewildered, having seen this terrific Form of Mine, getting rid of thy fear and with gladdened heart, behold thou again this My former Form. [49]

Sanjaya said:

Vâsudeva (Krishna), having thus spoken to Arjuna, showed again His own Form. The Great-souled One, having assumed again His gentle Form, pacified him (Arjuna) who was terrified. [50]

Arjuna said:

O Janârdana, seeing this, Thy gentle human Form, now my thoughts are collected and I have recovered myself. [51]

The Blessed Lord said:

This Form of Mine which thou hast seen is very difficult to perceive; even gods ever long to behold this Form. [52]

Neither by the Vedas, nor by austerities, nor by charitable gifts, nor by sacrifice, can I be seen as thou hast seen Me, [53]

But by single-hearted devotion alone I can be known in this manner, O Arjuna, and perceived in reality and also entered into, O Parantapa. [54]

O Pândava, he who works for Me, has Me for his highest goal, is devoted to Me, is free from attachment and bears enmity towards no creature, he enters into Me. [55]

*Here ends the Eleventh Chapter called
"Vishya-Rupa-Darsanam, or The
Vision of the Universal Form"*

CHAPTER XII

Arjuna said:

Those devotees who, ever steadfast, thus worship Thee and those who worship the Unmanifested Imperishable, which of them are better knowers of Yoga? [1]

The Blessed Lord said:

Those who, fixing their minds on Me, worship Me with perpetual devotion, endowed with supreme faith, to My mind they are the best knowers of Yoga. [2]

But those who contemplate the Imperishable, the Undefinable, Unmanifested, Omnipresent, Unthinkable, Unchangeable, Immovable and Eternal, [3]

Having subdued all the senses, even-minded everywhere, and engaged in doing good to all beings, verily they attain unto Me. [4]

Greater is their difficulty whose minds are set on the Unmanifested, for the goal of the Unmanifested is very arduous for the embodied to attain. [5]

But those who, surrendering all actions to Me and regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, worship Me with single-hearted devotion, [6]

For them whose hearts are thus fixed on Me, O son of Prithâ, I become ere long the Saviour from the ocean of mortal Samsâra (world of birth and death). [7]

Fix thy mind on Me alone and rest thine understanding in Me, thus thou shalt doubtlessly live in Me hereafter. [8]

O Dhananjaya, if thou art unable to fix thy mind steadfastly on Me, then, by faithful practice of devotion, do thou seek to reach Me. [9]

If thou art also unable to practise devotion, then be thou intent on working for Me. Even by performing actions for My sake, thou shalt attain perfection. [10]

If thou art not able to do even this,

then, taking refuge in Me alone, and self-controlled, do thou surrender the fruits of all actions. [11]

Knowledge is indeed better than blind practice; meditation excels knowledge; surrender of the fruits of action is more esteemed than meditation. Peace immediately follows surrender. [12]

He who hates no creature and is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egotism, equal-minded in pleasure and pain, and forgiving, [13]

Who is ever content and meditative, self-subjugated and possessed with firm conviction, with mind and intellect dedicated to Me, he who is thus devoted to Me is dear to Me. [14]

He by whom the world is not afflicted and who is not afflicted by the world, who is free from elation, envy, fear and anxiety, he is dear to Me. [15]

He who is free from all external dependence, pure, efficient, unattached, undisturbed, and has given up all (selfish)

undertakings, he who is thus devoted to Me is dear to Me. [16]

He who neither rejoices, nor hates, nor sorrows, nor desires and who has renounced good and evil, he who is thus full of devotion is dear to Me. [17]

He who is the same to friend and foe and also in honor and dishonor, the same in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, free from all attachment, [18]

He who is alike in praise and blame, is silent, content with everything, homeless, steady-minded, such a devoted soul is dear to Me. [19]

Those who follow this immortal Dharma (teaching) as declared (by Me) and who are possessed with faith, regarding Me as the Supreme Goal, such devotees are exceedingly dear to Me. [20]

*Here ends the Twelfth Chapter called
"Bhakti-Yoga, or The Path of
Devotion"*

CHAPTER XIII

[*Arjuna said:* O Keshava, Prakriti (Nature) and Purusha (Self), Kshetra and the knower of Kshetra, knowledge and that which ought to be known, these I desire to learn.]

The Blessed Lord said:

O son of Kunti, this body is called Kshetra (field), the wise call the knower of it as Kshetrajna (knower of the field). [1]

O descendant of Bharata, know Me to be the Kshetrajna (conscious Soul) in all Kshetras (bodies). To My mind, the knowledge of Kshetra (body) and Kshetrajna (Soul) is the true knowledge. [2]

What the Kshetra (field) is, of what nature, what are its modifications, whence it arises; also who is he (knower, Soul) and

what are his powers, do thou hear that from me in brief. [3]

This truth has been sung by the Rishis (Seers) in various ways, in many different hymns, in Brahma-Sutra-Aphorisms, full of sound reasoning and conviction. [4]

The great elements (earth, water, fire, air, ether), egoism, intellect, the Unmanifested (Nature), the ten organs (of sense and action) and the one (mind), the five sense-objects; [5]

Desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, combination (of these), consciousness, fortitude, thus the Kshetra (body) has been briefly described with its modifications. [6]

Humility, unostentatiousness, non-injuring, forgiveness, simplicity, service to the Guru (spiritual teacher), purity, steadfastness, self-control; [7]

Renunciation of sense-objects as well as absence of egoism, realization of the evils of birth, death, old age, disease, pain; [8]

Non-attachment, non-identification of self with son, wife, home and the rest;

equal-mindedness in beneficial and non-beneficial happenings; [9]

One-pointed and unwavering devotion to Me, resort to secluded places, distaste for assemblies; [10]

Constant devotion to spiritual knowledge, realization of the essence of Truth, this is declared to be wisdom; what is opposed to this is ignorance. [11]

I shall declare now that which is to be known, by knowing which one attains immortality. The Supreme Brahman is beginningless; It is said to be neither Sat (existence) nor Asat (non-existence). [12]

With hands and feet everywhere, with eyes, heads and mouths everywhere and with ears everywhere in the universe, That alone exists enveloping all. [13]

It shines through the functions of all the senses, and yet It is without senses; unattached, yet It sustains all; devoid of Gunas (qualities), yet It is the experiencer of Gunas. [14]

It exists within and without all beings;

It is unmoving as well as moving, incomprehensible because of Its subtlety; It is far and also near. [15]

Indivisible, yet It exists as if divided in beings; It is to be known as the Sustainer of beings; It destroys and also generates. [16]

It is the Light of lights and is said to be beyond darkness. It is knowledge, the One to be known, and the Goal of knowledge, dwelling in the hearts of all. [17]

Thus Kshetra (field), knowledge and that which is to be known, have been told briefly. My devotee, knowing this, becomes fitted to enter into My Being (oneness with Me). [18]

Know thou both Prakriti (Nature) and Purusha (Soul) to be without beginning. Know thou also that all the modifications and Gunas (qualities) are born of Prakriti. [19]

Prakriti is said to be the productive source of cause and effect; while the embodied soul is the cause of experiences of pleasure and pain. [20]

For the Purusha (Soul) experiences the Gunas, born of Prakriti; attachment to the Gunas is the cause of its birth in good and evil wombs. [21]

The great Soul (that dwells) in this body is called the Witness or Looker-on, the Sanctioner, the Sustainer, the Experiencer, the mighty Lord and also the Supreme Self. [22]

He who thus knows Purusha (Soul) and Prakriti (Nature) with the Gunas (qualities), howsoever he may be living, is not born again. [23]

Some, by meditation, behold the Self by the self within themselves; others by the path of wisdom; still others by the path of action. [24]

Others again, not possessing such knowledge themselves, worship as they have heard from others (illumined Souls); even they surmount death, by following with faith what they have heard. [25]

O mighty of the Bharata race, whatever is born, whether moving or unmoving,

know it to be (produced) from the union of Kshetra and Kshetrajna (Nature and Soul). [26]

The Supreme Lord abides in all beings equally; (He is) undying in the dying: He who sees (thus) sees truly. [27]

Seeing the same Lord existing everywhere equally, he does not hurt Self by the self and thus attains the highest goal. [28]

And he who sees that all actions are being performed by Prakriti (Nature) alone and that the Self is not acting, he sees truly. [29]

When he sees the separate existence of all beings established in One, and their expansion from that One alone, then he becomes Brahman (one with Brahman). [30]

O son of Kunti, being without beginning and devoid of Gunas, the Supreme Self is immutable; though dwelling in the body, It neither acts nor is affected (by the fruits of action). [31]

As the all-pervading ether (Akâsha) is not tainted, because of its subtlety, sim-

ilarly this Self, (though) existing everywhere in the body, is not tainted. [32]

O descendant of Bharata, as one sun illumines all this world, similarly He who dwells in the body illumines all bodies. [33]

They who thus, by the eyes of wisdom, perceive the distinction between body and soul, and the liberation of beings from Nature (Prakriti), they attain to the Supreme. [34]

*Here ends the Thirteenth Chapter called
"Yoga of Kshetra and Kshetrajna, or
The Path of Discrimination
between Body and Soul"*

CHAPTER XIV

The Blessed Lord said:

Now I shall again declare unto thee that supreme wisdom, which is above all wisdom, by knowing which all the Sages after this life attain to the highest perfection. [1]

Abiding by this wisdom, and having attained to My Being, neither do they come forth in evolution¹ nor are they affected in involution.² [2]

O descendant of Bharata, the great Prakriti is My womb; in that I place the seed, from thence is the birth of all beings. [3]

O son of Kunti, whatever forms are produced in all the wombs, the great Prakriti is the womb and I am the seed-giving Father. [4]

¹ Creation.

² Dissolution.

O mighty-armed, Sattwa, Rajas, Tamas,¹ these Gunas (qualities), born of Prakriti, bind the immutable, embodied soul in the body. [5]

O sinless one, of these (Gunas) Sattwa, being transparent, luminous and free from evil, binds (the embodied) by attachment to happiness and attachment to knowledge. [6]

O son of Kunti, know thou Rajas to be of the nature of passion, giving rise to thirst (for pleasure) and attachment. It binds the embodied by attachment to action. [7]

O Bhârata (Arjuna), know thou Tamas to be born of ignorance; it deludes all embodied beings and binds by false perception, indolence and sleep. [8]

O Bhârata, Sattwa attaches one to happiness; Rajas to action; while Tamas, covering wisdom, attaches one to false perception. [9]

O Bhârata (sometimes) Sattwa pre-

¹ Goodness, passion, darkness.

dominates over Rajas and Tamas; (sometimes) Rajas predominates over Sattwa and Tamas; and (sometimes) Tamas over Sattwa and Rajas. [10]

When through all the senses of this body the light of understanding shines forth, then it is to be known that Sattwa is predominant. [11]

O Prince of the Bharata race, greed, (excessive) activity, enterprise, restlessness, longing, these prevail when Rajas is predominant. [12]

O descendant of Kuru, darkness, inertia, false perception, and also delusion prevail when Tamas is predominant. [13]

If the embodied meets with death when Sattwa is predominant, then he attains the spotless regions of the knowers of the Highest. [14]

Meeting with death in Rajas, one is born among those attached to action; and dying in Tamas, one is born in the wombs of senseless beings. [15]

The fruit of good deeds is declared to

be Sâttwika and pure; the fruit of Rajas (passionate deeds) is pain; and ignorance is the fruit of Tamas. [16]

Wisdom is born of Sattwa; greed, of Rajas; false perception, delusion and ignorance arise from Tamas. [17]

The dwellers of Sattwa go upward; the Râjasic (of passionate natures) stay in the middle; and the Tâmasic, abiding in the functions of the lowest Guna, go downward. [18]

When the Seer beholds no other agent than the Gunas, and knows also That which is higher than the Gunas, then he attains to My Being. [19]

The embodied, having gone beyond these three Gunas, out of which the body is evolved, is liberated from birth, death, decay and pain, and attains to immortality. [20]

Arjuna said:

O Lord, what are the signs of him who has gone beyond the three Gunas? What

are his characteristics and how does he go beyond these three Gunas? [21]

The Blessed Lord said:

O Pândava, he who neither hates the presence of illumination (Sattwa), activity (Rajas) or delusion (Tamas), nor craves for them when they are absent; [22]

He who is seated unconcerned (like a witness) and is not moved by the Gunas, who is established and unshaken, knowing that the Gunas alone operate; [23]

He who is alike in pleasure and pain; self-possessed; regarding alike a lump of earth, a stone and gold; who is the same in pleasant and unpleasant, in praise and blame, and steady; [24]

He who is alike in honor and dishonor, the same to friend and foe, giving up all (selfish) undertakings, he is said to have crossed beyond the Gunas. [25]

And he who, crossing over these Gunas, serves Me with unwavering devotion, be-

comes fit to attain oneness with Brahman. [26]

For I am the Abode of Brahman, the Immutable, the Immortal, the eternal Dharma and Absolute Bliss. [27]

*Here ends the Fourteenth Chapter called
"Distinction of the Three
Gunas"*

CHAPTER XV

The Blessed Lord said:

They speak of an eternal Ashwattha (tree), rooted above and branching below, whose leaves are the Vedas. He who knows it knows the Vedas. [1]

Its branches are spread below and above, nourished by the Gunas; the sense-objects are its buds; its roots stretch down below in the world of men, creating actions. [2]

Its form is not visible here, neither its end nor its origin, nor its basis. Having cut down this firm-rooted Ashwattha tree by the mighty sword of non-attachment, [3]

Then that Goal is to be sought after, attaining which they (the wise) do not return again. I take refuge in that Primeval Being from which streams forth the Eternal (creative) Energy. [4]

Free from pride and false conceit, the evil of attachment conquered, ever devoted

to spiritual knowledge, desires completely pacified, liberated from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the undeluded reach that eternal Goal. [5]

That (Goal) the sun does not illumine, nor the moon, nor fire; going there, they (the wise) do not return. That is My Supreme Abode. [6]

A portion of Myself has become the living soul in the world of life from time without beginning. It draws the (five) senses and mind, the sixth (sense), which are in Prakriti. [7]

When the Lord (Soul) obtains a body and when He leaves it, He takes these (senses and mind) and goes forth as the wind (goes forth), carrying away the scents from their seats (the flowers). [8]

The embodied soul, presiding over the ear, eye, the sense of touch, of taste and smell, as well as over the mind, experiences sense-objects. [9]

Either going forth from the body, or residing in it, or experiencing, or united

with the Gunas, the deluded do not see It (the Soul); but those who have the eye of wisdom perceive It. [10]

The self-subjugated perceive It, dwelling in themselves; but the impure-hearted and the unintelligent, even though striving, behold It not. [11]

The light which resides in the sun, in the moon, in fire, and which illumines the whole world, know that light to be Mine. [12]

Entering the earth with My energy, I support all beings and I nourish all the herbs, becoming the watery moon. [13]

Dwelling in the body of living beings as Fire, I, being united with Prâna (ingoing breath) and Apâna (outgoing breath), digest four kinds of food.¹ [14]

I am seated in the hearts of all, from Me alone comes memory, wisdom, and also their loss. I am that which is known in all the Vedas. Verily I am the Author of Vedanta and the knower of the Vedas am I. [15]

¹ Fourfold foods which require masticating, sucking, licking and swallowing or drinking.

There are two kinds of beings in the world: the perishable and the imperishable; all beings are perishable, but the Purusha (Self) is imperishable. [16]

But there is another, the Highest Being, called the Supreme Self, who is the Immuta-
ble Lord, pervading the three worlds and supporting them. [17]

As I am beyond the perishable and am above even the imperishable, therefore in the world and in the Veda I am known as the Supreme Being. [18]

O descendant of Bharata, he who, free from delusion, thus knows Me as the Supreme Being, he, knowing all, worships Me with his whole heart. [19]

Thus, O sinless Bhârata, has been declared by Me the most profound teaching, knowing this one attains enlightenment and the fulfillment of all duties. [20]

*Here ends the Fifteenth Chapter called
"The Path of the Supreme
Being"*

CHAPTER XVI

The Blessed Lord said:

Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in Yoga of Self-knowledge, charitable gifts, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of the Sacred Scriptures, austerity and simplicity, [1]

Non-injury, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, peace, absence of calumny, compassion to beings, non-covetousness, gentleness, modesty and absence of fickleness, [2]

Vigor, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred and pride, these, O descendant of Bharata, belong to one born with the divine property. [3]

O Pârtha, ostentatiousness, arrogance and self-conceit, anger as well as cruelty and ignorance, belong to one born with the demonic property. [4]

The divine property is for liberation and

the demonic for bondage. Grieve not, O Pândava, thou art born with the divine property. [5]

O Pârtha, in this world there are twofold manifestations of beings; the divine and the demonic. The divine has been described at length. Hear from Me now of the demonic state. [6]

The demonic people know not how to follow right or how to refrain from wrong; there is neither purity, nor good conduct, nor truth in them. [7]

They say that "this universe is without truth, without a basis, without God, born of mutual union caused by lust. What else is there?" [8]

Holding this view, these ruined souls, of small understanding and of fierce deeds, rise as the enemies of the world for its destruction. [9]

Filled with insatiable desires, possessed with hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding evil fancies through delusion, they work with unholy resolve; [10]

Beset with immense cares, ending only in death; regarding sensual enjoyment as the highest and feeling sure that that is all there is; [11]

Bound by a hundred ties of hope, given over to lust and anger, they strive to secure hoards of wealth by unjust means, for sensual gratification. [12]

"This has been gained by me today and this desire I shall obtain, this is mine and this wealth also shall be mine." [13]

"That enemy has been slain by me, others also shall I slay. I am the lord, I am the enjoyer, I am successful, powerful and happy." [14]

"I am rich and well-born; who is equal to me? I shall sacrifice, I shall give, I shall rejoice": thus deluded by ignorance, [15]

Bewildered by many fancies, enwrapped in the net of delusion, addicted to the gratification of the senses, they fall into a foul hell. [16]

Self-glorifying, haughty, filled with the vanity and intoxication of wealth, they

perform sacrifices (merely) in name out of hypocrisy, disregarding the Scriptural injunctions. [17]

Possessed by egoism, power, insolence, lust and anger, these malignant people hate Me (dwelling) in their own bodies and in those of others. [18]

I hurl these malignant and cruel evil-doers, most degraded of men, into the wombs of Asuras¹ in the world (of birth and death). [19]

O son of Kunti, entering into the Asuric (unclean) wombs and deluded birth after birth, without attaining Me they fall into a still lower state. [20]

Lust, anger and greed, these three are the soul-destroying gates of hell. Therefore one should forsake these three. [21]

O son of Kunti, he who is free from these three gates of darkness, practises what is good for his soul and thus attains the Supreme Goal. [22]

He who, setting aside the injunctions of

¹ Unclean, cruel and godless creatures.

the Scriptures, follows the impulse of desire, attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the highest goal. [23]

Therefore let the Scriptures be thy authority in ascertaining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having learned the injunctions declared in the Scriptures, thou shouldst act here (in this world). [24]

*Here ends the Sixteenth Chapter called
 "Distinction between the Divine
 and the Demonic
 Property"*

CHAPTER XVII

Arjuna said:

O Krishna, those who, disregarding the injunctions of the Scriptures, perform sacrifice with faith, what is their state? Is it Sattwa (goodness), Rajas (passion) or Tamas (darkness)? [1]

The Blessed Lord said:

Threefold is the faith of the embodied, born of their inherent nature: Sâttwica (good), Râjasica (passionate), Tâmasica (ignorant). Do thou hear of that. [2]

O descendant of Bharata, the faith of each is according to his inherent nature. The man consists of his faith; he is verily what his faith is. [3]

The men of purity worship the gods; the men of passionate nature worship Yakshas and Râkshasas; while the others,

men of Tâmasica (ignorant) nature, worship ghosts (departed spirits) and goblins. [4]

The men who practise severe austerities, not enjoined by the Scriptures, being possessed with hypocrisy and egoism, impelled by lust and attachment, [5]

Torturing, senseless as they are, all the organs of the senses and Me, dwelling in the body, know them to be of demonic resolve. [6]

The foods also are of threefold nature which are liked respectively by each of these; and so also sacrifice, austerity and charitable gifts. Do thou hear the distinction of these. [7]

The foods which increase life-force, energy, strength, health, joy and cheerfulness, and which are savory, soothing, substantial and agreeable, are liked by the Sâttwica nature. [8]

The Râjasica nature likes foods which are bitter, sour, saline, over-hot, pungent, dry, burning, and which produce pain, grief and disease. [9]

That which is stale, insipid, putrid, cooked over night, even leavings or unclean food is liked by the Tâmasica nature. [10]

That sacrifice is Sâttwica which is performed by men desiring no fruit, as it is enjoined by the Scriptural laws, with the mind fixed on the sacrifice alone, just for its own sake. [11]

But, O best of the Bharatas, that which is performed with the desire for fruits and for ostentation, know that to be Râjasica sacrifice. [12]

The sacrifice which is performed without regard to Scriptural injunctions, in which no food is distributed, and which is without sacred texts, charitable gifts and faith, is said to be Tâmasica. [13]

Worship of the gods, of the twice-born,¹ of Gurus² and wise men; purity, simplicity, continence, non-injury: these are called the austerity of the body. [14]

Speech, which causes no pain (to others)

¹ Brâhmanas.

² Spiritual teachers.

and is true as well as pleasant and beneficial; regular study of the Scriptures: these are called the austerity of speech. [15]

Cheerfulness of mind, kindliness, silence, self-control, purity of heart: these are called austerity of the mind. [16]

When this threefold austerity is practised, by men of steadfast devotion, with great faith, without desiring fruits, it is said to be Sâttwica. [17]

When this austerity is performed with the object of gaining welcome, honor and worship, or from ostentation, it is said to be Râjasica, unstable and fleeting. [18]

The austerity which is performed with deluded understanding, by self-torture or for the purpose of injuring another, that is said to be Tâmasica. [19]

“To give is right”: with this thought, giving to one who does nothing in return, in a fit place, time and to a worthy person, is regarded as a Sâttwica gift. [20]

That gift which is made with the thought of receiving in return or of looking for the

fruits, or given reluctantly, is known as a Râjasica gift. [21]

The gift which is made in the wrong place or time, to unworthy persons, with disrespect and contempt, that is said to be a Tâmasica gift. [22]

“Om, Tat, Sat” (Yes, That, the Real), this is declared to be the triple name of Brahman, by which were made of old the Brâhmanas, the Vedas and sacrifices. [23]

Therefore the followers of the Vedas always begin their acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity by uttering “Om” as enjoined in the Scriptures. [24]

By uttering “Tat,” without looking for fruits, the seekers after liberation perform various acts of sacrifice, austerity and gift. [25]

O Pârtha, the word “Sat” is used in the sense of reality and of goodness; and the word “Sat” is also used in the sense of auspicious act. [26]

Steadfastness in sacrifice, austerity and gift is called “Sat,” and action performed

for the sake of That (Supreme) is also called
 "Sat." [27]

O Pârtha, whatever is sacrificed, or given,
 or performed, or whatever austerities are
 practised without faith, that is called
 "Asat" (Unreal). It is neither good for
 here nor for hereafter. [28]

Here ends the Seventeenth Chapter called
"Division of the Threefold
Faith"

CHAPTER XVIII

Arjuna said:

O Lord of the senses, O Mighty-armed, O Destroyer of Keshi, I desire to know respectively the truth regarding Sannyâsa (renunciation) as well as of Tyâga (relinquishment). [1]

The Blessed Lord said:

The Sages declare that the renunciation of actions with desire (for fruits) is Sannyâsa, and the learned declare that the relinquishment of the fruits of all actions is Tyâga. [2]

Some philosophers declare that all actions should be given up as an evil; while others say that the work of sacrifice, gift and austerity should never be given up. [3]

O best of the Bharatas, O tiger among men, hear from Me the final truth regard-

ing relinquishment; for relinquishment has been declared to be of three kinds. [4]

The acts of sacrifice, gift and austerity are not to be relinquished, but should indeed be performed; for sacrifice, gift and austerity are purifying to the discriminative. [5]

But, O Pârtha, even these acts are to be performed, giving up attachment and the fruits. This is My best and sure conviction. [6]

Relinquishment of the prescribed actions is not proper. Abandonment of the same, through delusion, is declared to be Tâmasica. [7]

He who relinquishes action out of fear of bodily trouble, thinking "it is painful," thus performing Râjasica relinquishment, does not obtain the fruit thereof. [8]

O Arjuna, giving up attachment and fruit, when prescribed action is performed because it should be done, such relinquishment is regarded as Sâttwica. [9]

The relinquisher, imbued with Sattwa

and steady understanding, with his doubts destroyed, does not hate a disagreeable work, nor is he attached to an agreeable one. [10]

It is not possible for the embodied to relinquish actions entirely; but he who relinquishes the fruits of action is called a (true) relinquisher. [11]

Good, evil and mixed, threefold is the fruit of action obtained by non-relinquishers after death; but never by relinquishers. [12]

O mighty-armed, learn from Me the five causes for the accomplishment of all action, as it is declared in the Sâṅkhya philosophy: [13]

The body, the agent, the various senses, the different and manifold functions and the presiding deity as the fifth. [14]

Whatever action man performs with his body, speech and mind, whether right or the reverse, these five are its causes. [15]

This being the case, he who, through impure understanding, looks upon his Self, the One, as the agent, he of perverted mind, sees not (the Truth). [16]

He who has no egotistical notion, (such as "I am the doer"), whose understanding is not affected (by good and evil), even though slaying these people, he neither slays nor is bound (by action). [17]

The knowledge, the knowable, and the knower are the threefold cause of action; the instrument (senses), the object and the agent, are the threefold basis of action. [18]

Knowledge, action and agent are declared in the Sâmkhya philosophy to be threefold, according to the distinction of the Gunas. Hear them also duly. [19]

Know that knowledge to be Sâttwica, by which is seen in all beings the One Immutable, inseparate in the separate. [20]

But the knowledge which sees in all beings the distinct entities of diverse kinds as different from one another, know that knowledge to be Râjasica (passionate). [21]

While that knowledge which is confined to one single effect, as if it were the whole, without reason, not founded on truth, and trivial, that is declared to be Tâmasica. [22]

The action which is ordained, performed by one not desirous of fruits, free from attachment and without love or aversion, is declared to be Sâttwica. [23]

But the action which is performed with longing for objects of desire, or with egoism, or with much effort, is declared to be Râjasica. [24]

The action which is undertaken from delusion, without heed to ability and consequence, loss and injury (to others) is said to be Tâmasica. [25]

Free from attachment, non-egotistic, endued with perseverance and enthusiasm, unaffected in success or failure, such an agent is called Sâttwica. [26]

He who is passionate and desirous of the fruits of action, greedy, malignant, impure, easily moved by joy or sorrow, such an agent is called Râjasica. [27]

Unsteady, vulgar, arrogant, dishonest, malicious, indolent, despondent, procrastinating, such an agent is called Tâmasica. [28]

O Dhananjaya, hear thou the distinction of understanding and fortitude according to the threefold Gunas, as I declare them exhaustively and distinctively. [29]

O Pârtha, know that understanding to be Sâttwica which knows when to act and when to abstain from action; also right and wrong action, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation. [30]

O Pârtha, that by which the understanding is distorted regarding right and wrong, proper and improper action, that is called Râjasica understanding. [31]

That understanding which is covered with darkness and regards unrighteousness as righteousness, and looks upon all things in a perverted light, that, O Pârtha, is Tâmasica understanding. [32]

That firmness, O Pârtha, by which one can control the activity of the mind, Prâna and senses, through the unwavering practice of Yoga, that firmness is Sâttwica. [33]

But that firmness by which one clings to duty, desire and wealth, being attached

therein and desirous of fruits, that firmness is Râjasica. [34]

O Pârtha, that by which a stupid man does not give up sleep, fear, grief, despondency and vanity, that firmness is Tâmasica. [35]

O Prince of the Bharata race, now hear from Me regarding the threefold happiness, that happiness which one enjoys by habit and by which one comes to the end of pain. [36]

That which is like poison in the beginning and like nectar in the end, that happiness is said to be Sâttwica (pure), born of the blissful knowledge of the Self. [37]

That happiness which arises from the contact of the senses with sense-objects and is like nectar in the beginning but like poison in the end, is declared to be Râjasica. [38]

That happiness which begins and ends in self-delusion, arising from sleep, indolence and false perception, is declared to be Tâmasica. [39]

There is no being on earth or in heaven among the gods, who is free from these three Gunas, born of Prakriti (Nature). [40]

O Parantapa (Arjuna), the duties of Brâhmanas, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and also of Sudras, are distributed according to their Gunas, born of their nature. [41]

Control of mind and senses, austerity, purity, forgiveness and also simplicity, knowledge, realization and faith in God, these are the duties of Brâhmanas, born of their nature. [42]

Bravery, energy, firmness, skill and also not flying from the battle, generosity, lordliness, are the duties of Kshatriyas, born of their nature. [43]

Agriculture, rearing of cattle and trade are the duties of the Vaisyas, born of their nature. Service is the duty of Sudras, born of their nature. [44]

Man attains perfection, being engaged in his own duty. Hear now how one engaged in his own duty attains perfection. [45]

Him from Whom is the evolution of all

beings, by Whom all this is pervaded, by worshipping Him with his own duty man attains perfection. [46]

Better is one's own duty, although imperfect, than that of another well performed. He who does the duty born of his own nature incurs no sin. [47]

O son of Kunti, one should not relinquish the duty to which he is born, though it is defective, for all undertakings are surrounded by evil as fire by smoke. [48]

He, whose understanding is unattached everywhere, who is self-subjugated, devoid of desires, he, by renunciation, attains the supreme perfection, consisting in freedom from action. [49]

O son of Kunti, after reaching such perfection, how he attains to Brahman, the highest Goal of Wisdom, do thou hear that from Me in brief. [50]

Endued with pure understanding; subduing self by firmness; relinquishing sound and other sense-objects; abandoning longing and aversion; [51]

Resorting to a secluded spot; eating little; controlling body, speech and mind; ever steadfastly engaged in meditation and concentration; endued with dispassion; [52]

Forsaking egoism, power, pride, lust, anger and possession; freed from the notion of "mine" and tranquil: one is thus fit to become one with Brahman. [53]

Becoming one with Brahman, serene-minded, he neither grieves nor desires; alike to all beings, he attains supreme devotion unto Me. [54]

By devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; having thus known Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me. [55]

Even though constantly performing all actions, taking refuge in Me, through My grace he attains to the Eternal, Immutable Abode. [56]

Surrendering mentally all actions to Me, regarding Me as the highest goal, resorting to Self-knowledge, do thou ever fix thy heart on Me. [57]

Fixing thy heart on Me, thou shalt, by My grace, overcome all obstacles; but if, through egoism, thou wilt not hear Me, thou shalt perish. [58]

If, actuated by egoism, thou thinkest: "I will not fight," in vain is this thy resolve. Thine own nature will impel thee. [59]

O son of Kunti, being bound by thine own Karma, born of thine own nature, thou shalt be helplessly led to do that which from delusion thou desirest not to do. [60]

O Arjuna, the Lord dwells in the heart of all beings, causing all beings to revolve, as if mounted on a wheel. [61]

O Bhârata, take refuge in Him with all thy heart; through His grace thou shalt attain Supreme Peace and the Eternal Abode. [62]

Thus wisdom, most profound of all secrets, has been declared unto thee by Me; pondering over it fully, do as thou likest. [63]

Hear again My Supreme Word, most profound of all; for thou art My dearly beloved, therefore I shall speak for thy good. [64]

Fill thy heart with Me, be thou devoted to Me, do thou worship Me, bow down to Me. Thus thou shalt attain unto Me. Truly I promise thee, for thou art dear to Me. [65]

Giving up all Dharmas (righteous and unrighteous actions), come unto Me alone for refuge. I shall free thee from all sins; grieve not. [66]

This should never be spoken by thee to one who is devoid of austerity or without devotion, nor to one who does not render service, nor to one who speaks ill of Me. [67]

He who, with supreme devotion to Me, will declare this deeply profound secret to My devotees, doubtless he shall come unto Me. [68]

There is none among men who does dearer service to Me than he, nor shall there be any other on earth dearer to Me than he. [69]

And he who shall study this Sacred Dialogue between us, by him I shall be worshipped with sacrifice of wisdom. Such is My conviction. [70]

And even that man who shall hear this, full of faith and without malice, he too, being freed from evil, shall attain to the sacred region of those of righteous deeds. [71]

O son of Prithâ, has this been heard by thee with an attentive mind? O Dhananjaya, has the delusion of thine ignorance been destroyed? [72]

Arjuna said:

My delusion is destroyed and I have regained my memory, through Thy grace, O Changeless One. I stand firm with doubts dispelled; I will do Thy Word. [73]

Sanjaya said:

Thus have I heard this wonderful Dialogue between Vâsudeva (Krishna) and great-souled Pârtha, causing my hair to stand on end. [74]

Through the grace of Vyâsa have I heard this supreme and most profound Yoga, declared directly by Krishna Himself, the Lord of Yoga. [75]

O King, as I remember, over and over,

this wonderful and holy Dialogue between Keshava and Arjuna, I rejoice again and again. [76]

And as I remember, over and over, that most wonderful Form of Hari (the Lord), great is my wonder, O King, and I rejoice again and again. [77]

Wherever is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, wherever is Pârtha, the bowman, there are prosperity, victory, glory, sound polity. Such is my firm conviction. [78]

*Here ends the Eighteenth Chapter called
"The Path of Liberation through Renuncia-
tion" in the Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita, the
Essence of the Upanishads, the
Science of Brahman, the Scrip-
ture of Yoga, the Dialogue
between Sri Krishna
and Arjuna*

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